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THE *Diſtreſs'd State* OF IRELAND CONSIDERED;

MORE PARTICULARLY WITH Reſpect to the *NORTH.*

IN A LETTER to a Friend.

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THE DISTRESS'D STATE OF *IRELAND* Conſidered, &c.

SR.

AS the calamitous Circumſtances our poor native Country labours under, are ſenſibly felt by Multitudes, and afford Matter of Converſation and mournful Reflection to Men of all Ranks who lay the diſtreſſed State of *Ireland* to heart: And this being the affecting Subject of our Converſation, when you and I lately had a Meeting; I thought it proper to give you my Thoughts more fully and particularly on that melancholly Subject in this Letter, leaving you at Liberty to make uſe of it, either, in a more private Way to Friends, or more publickly, if you think it will anſwer any valuable and common End.

EVERY one (even the meaneſt) is, or ought to be concern'd in the State of the Country or Community whereof he is a Member, and be ſuitably touch'd either, with its good or bad Situation, its Proſperity or Adverſity; and therefore ſhou'd contribute what is in his Power to promote the publick Benefit, or to leſſen the publick Evil.

The following Conſiderations are rather an Indication of my willingneſs to do ſomething that way, than an apprehenſion of ſufficient Abilities for ſo good an End. And as none better qualified, has at preſent (that I know of) made any Remarks publick on our diſtreſs'd and ſinking Condition, nor propoſed any Means that may be uſeful for our Relief; ſo if any thing here inſiſted on, may give any proper Hints to be improven to better Purpoſe by Men of true Love to their Country and Abilities to ſerve it; or to move ſuch as ſeem to be too indolent about our dangerous Condition, and too regardleſs of the common Good, and the Comfort or Support of their Fellow-Creatures, to make a nearer Enquiry into the State of their diſtreſſed Country, and to purſue ſuch Meaſures as may be for the Publick Good, (to which their own Intereſt is ſtrictly connected) I ſhall greatly rejoice in gaining ſuch an End, as may in the leaſt tend to common Advantage. And if any ſhall be offended at ſome things that may be remarked, (for as to the main Deſign I hope it will appear to be honeſtly meant for common Benefit;) I ſhall be very eaſy, unleſs I ſhall have Cauſe to ſee that they are contrary to Reaſon, to Equity and Charity, and the like moral or ſocial Virtues, and conſequently contrary to the Publick Good.

THAT Numbers of People labour under great Hardſhips, and of different kinds in *Ireland* this preſent Year; and that it has been ſo, more eſpecially in the Northren Counties for a good many Years paſt, will, I think, appear to a ſerious Conſiderer. The uncommon Height of Markets through the Summer, the Scarcity of Bread (that in ſome Places comes near to a Famine,) and the Poverty of the greater part of Buyers, are Hardſhips that have been very general through the Kingdom this Year. No doubt the loſs of the Potatoes by the ſevere Froſt contributed to this Calamity; but had there been any tolerable Quantity of Grain or Meal in the Country, all that Loſs wou'd not have raiſed Markets ſo extravagantly: For had we been in any good way as to Proviſions, that Loſs (even tho' the Crop had been worſe laſt Year) might have been born. But the Scarcity of Bread (eſpecially in the *North*) by the Badneſs of the Seaſons and Crops for ſeveral Years paſt, and the Loſs in two Years, *viz.* 28 and 33, by

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by ſhaking Winds, has rendered the Caſe of Multitudes very mournful before the preſent Year, and contributed much to the Diſtreſs in it! Nay, for above a Dozen Years paſt, we cou'd ſcarely be ſaid to have Plenty; at leaſt equal to the Produce that has been known in the Country! as if God was puniſhing us for our Sins, by turning a fruitful Land into Barrenneſs! And when in two or three Years, we have had pretty good Harveſts; the Generality being in want, it made ſo early, and ſo great a Conſumption, that nothing cou'd be reſerv'd for a worſe Year: So that it could ſcarcely be ſaid, like *Pharoah*'s blaſted Ears eating up the good Ones, that our bad Years eat up the good Ones, but the good Ones eat up themſelves! And in ſome of the bad Years, we muſt have been under the ſad Calamity of a down right Famine, had it not been for the Supply we had from other Parts. This is evident from the preſent Year; for of how great Service was the little that was imported (in Compariſon of ſome former hard Years import) tho' we wanted much more. But even this, (tho' in itſelf a great Mercy) has nevertheleſs increaſed the common Diſtreſs, by the vaſt Drain of ready Caſh for Meal and Grain; ſo that by the Scarcity of Money, (and many by a ſucceſſive buying for ſeveral Years,) not only the poorer Sort, but even a good many of better Circumſtances are rendered uncapable to provide for their pinched Families. By ſuch a train of bad Crops that we have had for ſeveral Years together, (which is not very uſual in a Country,) many in ſeveral Parts are reduced to down right Poverty! People might have born a bad Year or two, and recruited; but when they have been buying Bread for ſeveral Years (and that not thoſe who uſually, or at ſometimes buy, but a great Number of thoſe who hold ſuch Farms as formerly afforded them for ſale;) and having all other Demands to anſwer, muſt they not be quite exhauſted? When ſuch as hold Farms at twelve or fifteen, or twenty Pounds Rent *per Annum*, and ſome above it, had a great Part of their Bread to buy in ſome of the former Years; and more being in ſuch Circumſtances this preſent Year; and even ſome of 'em who had Credit, to borrow Money for that End. When Farmers muſt purchaſe Bread, (Oat Meal,) or their Families ſtarve, between two Shillings and eight Pence and three and ſix Pence *per* Score; can

there be a clearer Evidence of their miſerable Condition, and that the Country is in a very low, or almoſt ruined State?

And tho' Farmers have in many places (eſpecially in the *North*) labour'd ſo long under this Diſtreſs; yet, Rents and Tythes have all the while been kept very high, nay frequently a raiſing, as if their Circumſtances and Abilities had been encreaſing, tho' the contrary is evident. This has given occaſion to conſiderable Numbers to leave us, and ſhift for themſelves in the foreign Plantations. Their complaints were loud, about the exorbitant height of Rents and Tythes; that they had ſtruggled ſo long under them, 'till they were ſo far reduced, that they thought it beſt to go while they had any thing left; and it's well known that many went who had ſcarce ſufficient to tranſport their Families. The Proviſions that came to *Ireland* from the Plantations (of which we have too much ſad Experience year after year,) gave them ground to conclude they would get Bread there, of which they were ſo much pinch'd here: So that it did not appear to be a wanton Humour, or a Fondneſs of ſeeing the World, (at leaſt as to the far greater part,) that made ſo many leave their Friends and native Country, and that under ſeveral Diſadvantages. They left the Hardſhips they were under, and they ſaw the Difficulties they muſt encounter, in taking ſuch a courſe for their Relief; but they concluded it was better to bear greater Hardſhips for a little while, (if they ſhould meet with them in their Voyage and Settlement,) than continue under a Succeſſion of, even leſſer ones; beſides the probable Proſpect they had that their Removal wou'd be for the better. And there's Reaſon to apprehend that more Families in the *North* of *Ireland* had left it before now, if it had not been for the Expectation of times growing better; tho' their Hopes have been entirely fruſtrated: And that others alſo had taken the ſame Courſe, if they had been able to tranſport themſelves and their Families.

But leaving thoſe who have left us; I need not uſe many Words to illuſtrate the Truth of what is as clear as the Light, that we have been for a conſiderable Time, and more eſpecially are, at preſent in a very low Condition. This is what Multitudes feel, and all profeſs to bewail:

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But whence our Malady ariſeth, and what may (humanly ſpeaking) be a proper Remedy, is worthy of our Conſideration. The Caſe of the Poor (and alſo that of many Tradeſmen,) by the Scarcity and Price of Bread is doleful enough! But as ſuch have few Demands to anſwer, ſo if they can rub through a little, 'till Providence grant the Weeks of the Harveſt, they have a Proſpect of being pretty ſafe. But the Caſe of Farmers who have an heavy Charge on 'em, and ſeveral Demands to anſwer, and are moreover much reduced by a train of hard Years, is, I apprehend much more doleful! They are generally complaining, that though they labour and toil with all the Induſtry they can, yet they are not able to keep their Affairs in any tolerable bearing. Not only have they been for ſeveral Years unable to pay Rent and Tythe, but ſcarcely cou'd they get Bread: They think there ſeem not to be Bowels of Compaſſion, either in Landlords or Clergy, who, tho' they cannot but be ſenſible of the low State of Multitudes, and the almoſt ſtarving Condition of many, in a Courſe of above a dozen of Years, (with but ſmall Intermiſſion,) through the badneſs of the Seaſons and Crops: that, yet they have not the leaſt Inclination to give them any little Relief, (if it were till Times mend) by abating Rents and Tythes: But wherever they can, (eſpecially as to Tythes, which are moſtly but a yearly Bargain) are ſqueezing them ſtill higher! Others again, who are yet able to ſubſiſt, complain they have no ſure Tenure of their Farms to encourage them to improve for the Benefit of their Families, and that of the Publick. And if they improve, or are thriving, they are in danger of having their Heels tript up by ſome underhand Bidder, who with many Landlords, is apt to be preferr'd to an old Tenant, and, who perhaps had his Rent fully rais'd on him, and paid it well. In ſhort they ſay their Caſe is like to be little better than that of the *Iſraelites*, when enjoin'd to make Brick without Straw, if they muſt pay heavy Rents, and exorbitant Tythe, when the Heavens deny the Seaſons, and the Ground its former Produce: And that they have much the like Reaſon to ſay to Landlords and Clergy, as *Pharoah*'s Servants ſaid to him (knoweſt thou not yet that *Ægypt* is deſtroy'd,) know ye not that *Ire-*

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land, particularly the *North* (if not quite deſtroy'd, yet) is in a moſt low and ſinking Condition.

SHOULD it be allowed that ſome may exaggerate the Matter under their Diſtreſſes; yet if this Complaint be examin'd, I fear there will be too juſt Cauſe found for it; and that the Bulk of Farmers (who have no way of living but by their Farms,) are not able to bear Rents and Tythes, as now generally ſet; that Farms are now moſtly above the Value, diſproportioned to the Produce of the Ground, (even in better Seaſons,) and to our Trade and Circumſtances. Muſt not the Caſe of Farmers be very deplorable, when it's eaſy to get Eſtates in the *North* of *Ireland*, where all the Effects on them (and perhaps Money too among common Farmers,) wou'd not probably pay the Arrears and current Rent? And what wou'd become of great Scopes of the Country, and great Numbers of Families, if ſome Landlords ſhould puſh the Payment of what is owing to them? And how can it be otherwiſe when they have endured ſuch a Courſe of Hardſhips for ſeveral Years? For not to mention ſmaller Farms, many of which don't afford Bread to ſuch as hold them (and perhaps with numerous Families too,) above two or three Months in the Year; when many ſuch as have larger Farms ſhall buy all their Bread, ſome for ſix, ſome for ſeven Months, and perhaps ſome Seed too. What muſt then the State of ſuch Farmers be? And eſpecially as this happens not to be their Caſe for a ſingle Year. How ſhall their Rents and Tythes be paid? If they ſpare a little Barley, it, with the Produce of their Cattle, and what they can make by Flax, will never anſwer all Demands. I have heard Perſons of Knowledge and Probity give their Opinion as to ſome of theſe Years, that the Produce in ſome Places wou'd not maintain the Inhabitants, not including any Town; and I have Reaſon to believe the Truth of it. And if an Inquiry was made this Year, I believe it would be found in ſome Parts, where there is not one Farmer in ſix, perhaps more, but have had more or leſs Bread to buy, and ſeveral of them for ſeveral Months, tho' living under a light Rent. And I know ſome Farmers, who had very little more Oats than they ſowed: and with ſome ſo bad, that it yielded little or no Meal. The like has been the Caſe, with not a few alſo in other Years:

Years: And how ſhall Farmers then pay, even moderate Rents and Tythes, with other things needful, and maintain Families; and eſpecially when few of them have any ſurplus of Proviſions from a former Year? Another thing that increaſes the Diſtreſs with ſome, is, that in ſome of the bad Seaſons, they have (to their great Loſs) been oblig'd to ſow the Lands over again in the Spring, they had in Winter ſowed with Hard-Corn.

THE great Riſe of Lands in *Ireland* has been ſince the late happy Revolution; and as the Nation has been in a ſettled and peaceable State ſince that time, it may be allowed that a moderate Raiſing of Rents and Tythes might been born, and eſpecially if Tenants had been encouraged by longer Tenures to improve: but the preſent and general Height of both, ſeems to threaten a pretty general Breaking of Tenants, unleſs ſome Alteration for the better be ſoon among them. See what the Author of the Miſerable State of *Ireland* ſays as to Rents, p. 6. 'A Gentleman thinks he has but indifferently improved 'his Eſtate, if he has not doubled his Rent Roll, Farms 'are ſcrewed up to a rack Rent, Leaſes granted for a 'ſmall Term of Years, Tenants tied down to hard Conditions, and diſcouraged from cultivating the Lands they 'occupy to the beſt Advantage, by the Certainty they 'have of the Rent being raiſed on the Expiration of their 'Leaſes proportionable to the Improvement they make. 'Thus is honeſt Induſtry reſtrained, the Farmer is a ſlave 'to the Landlord, *&c.*' This Author is alledged to be a near Friend to the Clergy, and there's Ground to think ſo, as he makes no mention of the Tythes which are as great, or a greater Burden than what he complains of: and tho' he is reckoned a Patriot of his Country, yet his not ſhewing the Farmers hard Caſe by Tythes as well as Rents, ſhews too much Partiality. His Obſervation of Rents being doubled will generally hold, and in ſome Places more than doubled, unleſs in ſome Parts on, or near the Shore, that were well inhabited before the Revolution.—Now I wou'd fain know if we are twice richer (or more which is needful to anſwer Rents and Tythes more than doubled) or if the Ground produces twice more than about forty Years ago. No Body can ſay the latter; ſure woful Experience ſhews us that our Produce is much leſs. And 'tis alſo

alſo to be conſidered, that probably we are a third more numerous than about forty Years ago, which wou'd require a third more Wealth, at leaſt Proviſions to put us on a Level with that Time, even ſuppoſing Rents and Tythes to be no higher than forty Years ago. I doubt not but there's an Increaſe of Tillage in proportion to our Increaſe of People, and all we ſee little enough: But I queſtion if there be an Increaſe of Money and Riches in proportion to the Advancement of Rents and Tythes and other Demands. A greater Number of People cannot be ſuppoſed to anſwer the ſame Demands that a leſs Number may, unleſs their Subſtance be greater. Now if we be not richer (unleſs a more luxurious Way of living than forty Years paſt makes it ſo,) in Proportion to the Advance of Rents and Tythes ſince that time and the Increaſe of our Numbers, nor have more plentiful Crops; what Ground is there for doubling Rents and Tythes, or even more than doubling in many Places? One ſhould think it will require conſiderably more now, than twice the Riches at the aforeſaid Time; but it is very queſtionable if it be ſo. Thoſe who remember that Time, boaſt of the Plenty of Money after the Revolution; and the aforeſaid Author takes Notice of the Plenty of it, and the Briskneſs of our Trade; and obſerves that the firſt and greateſt Shock our Trade received, was by the *Engliſh* Act prohibiting the Exportation of Wool manufactured in *Ireland*; and indeed that Act has been always reckoned a great Grievance upon us, tho' upon Occaſſion lately it was made uſe of to ſerve an End that ſeem'd not to have the leaſt Reference to it.

It is commonly ſaid that we have now a better Trade, and more Money in *Ireland* than formerly, and of courſe Rents and Tythes will riſe; nor is there any thing unreaſonable as the Nation advances in Trade and Wealth, that, conſequently Gentlemen and Clergy ſhou'd improve their Concerns. I own when it is really ſo, and the Improvements (as 'tis called) of Rents and Tythes proportion'd to the improv'd State of a Nation and the Abilities of Farmers, there's ſomething to be ſaid for this. But I'm far miſtaken if there be not more flouriſh in this darling Topick of our great Folks than Reality. I can't blame them for deſiring Things were better with us, and they wou'd

wou'd do well to contribute what is in their Power for that End. And they wou'd alſo conſider if there be no Danger, leſt the Improvement they ſo much Study, lay in a Fund for Repentance, or what is worſe with many of 'em. If the Times be ſo Happy, and Things ſo Flouriſhing; one wou'd think, the toiling Husbandman who ſupplies all, even to the King himſelf, as *Solomon* obſerves, is juſtly entitled to a Share in the common Felicity. But is there any juſt Reaſon to ſay they do? Or that they enjoy better Times now than formerly. Some of them remember 30 or 40, or even 50 Years back; ask them if the Country is in a better State now. Have Farmers more Eaſe? Are they cloathed or fed better? Or can they anſwer all Demands they are under, and provide for their Families better now than at that Time? It is ſomething hard, if only the Greater Sort ſhould have all the Happineſs of our Halcyon Days, and the meaner Sort who Support 'em, ſhould have none, or but very little of it.—— And then as for the Quantity of Money we have; why ſo many and loud Complaints for want of it? The Merchant and Dealer cry out of its Scarcity: The Farmer and Tradeſman, they cannot get it, nay not to buy Bread for their poor Families: And Families are to be found without a Spoonful of Meal among 'em for ſome Weeks, and that not of ſuch, as are commonly reckon'd the Poor. It's a pity, nay it's baſe and mean, that there were ſo many Complaints (which every Body hears,) in the Years we're ſuppoſed to be in a thriving Way and to abound in Money. But allowing there's more running Caſh in *Ireland* than ever was, as it's probable there is; yet, what is that to the purpoſe, if it be not proportionable to Rents, Tythes, and buying Proviſions, with other occaſions for it. If Money anſwers not the preſent Demands, it is in Effect leſs, tho' more in Quantity, than when the Quantity was leſs, and the Demands fewer and lower, as in our fore-Fathers Days. Ask the Landlord, the Parſon or Tythe Farmer if Rents and Tythes be better paid theſe late Years than in the former ones. Ask the Merchant, the Creditor, the Tradeſman how readily they're paid, and judge of your plenty of Money by that. Sure if People had it, they wou'd not fooliſhly undergo ſuch Trouble and Coſt to pay where 'tis due, as 'tis plain many do before

fore they can pay their Debt. Was there ever more deſtraining for Rent, more Levying or Proſecuting for Tythe, or more ſuits for Debt than in theſe Times? And yet we're in a rich and proſperous State (at leaſt if a Crop ſhould bring Markets a little lower) in ſome mens Opinion, who are apt to conclude, becauſe they have, that no Body wants, or may ſubſiſt well enough in the Station they fill.

But to conſider our Trade a little, and ſee if it be equal to what ſome ſuppoſe. No doubt ſome have riſen, and others are riſing by Trade; but what is this to the poor Farmer? Is it better for him now, living at a rack Rent and Tythe, becauſe ſome are gaining by Trade, and it may be chiefly, by importing ſuch Things as promote the Vice and Luxury of the Times, than it was above 20 or 30 years ago, when we were exporting Meal, Malt, Wheat, *&c.* and had alſo leſs Rent and Tythe to pay than now, when he muſt be indebted to the Merchant for importing his Proviſion, beſides paying an high Price for it, or elſe ſtarve. Will a Nation ever be in a flouriſhing Condition (eſpecially one like *Ireland*) where the Farmer muſt, in a great meaſure Support his Family with the Product of other Countries, as it has been with us for ſo many Years? Is there not a general Complaint through the Nation of the dulneſs of Trade and lowneſs of Markets? And even our favourite Buſineſs itſelf, the Linnen, turns out but indifferently ſome Years. And what can the boaſting of our Trade mean? It looks like a pretence to skreen the high Demands of Rent and Tythe. The Pamphlet before mention'd, lays the Cauſe of the miſerable State of *Ireland*, in a great Meaſure on the decay of Trade, and has this Remark on it, p. 7. 'The diſmal Time of Trade we 'had during *Mar*'s troubles in *Scotland*, are look'd upon 'as happy Days when compared with the preſent.' As that Paper was wrote above three Years ago, I believe none will alledge that we're in a better Situation now; and eſpecially as 'tis a time of War that endangers Trading, as much or more than that Rebellion may be ſuppoſed to have done, beſides the Increaſe of our hardſhips at Home.

To make this more fully appear, let us conſider what an Ingenious Gentleman *Arthur Dobbs*, Eſq; (who has been at great Pains to know the State of *Ireland* and its Trade) obſerves

obſerves in his Eſſay on the Trade and Improvement of *Ireland*; where *part* 1ſt. *p.* 8. he ſhews in a Table the Ballance of our Trade for ſeveral Years, and that the Ballance was in our Favour from the Year 1710 to the Year 1726, in which Year it turn'd againſt us 12187 l. and p. 17, in another Table he ſhews the Produce of the Exports of Grain from the Year 1719, to the Year 1726 to be at a Medium *per* Year 36419 l. But p. 20 he ſhews, that at a Medium for Six of thoſe Years before Lady-Day 1727, there was Imported on four Articles only, viæ. Wheat, Flower, Malt, and Barley, to the Value of 39063 l. which is 2644 l. more *per* Year than was exported; whereas in the Exports of thoſe very Years, beſides the ſeveral Kinds of Grain, all Things produced from Grain are included, as Beer, Aquavitæ, Bread, Meal, &c. By this it appears, that in the Year 1726, the Ballance of Trade in general turned againſt us: It alſo appears that, if in thoſe Six Years which he Ballances as to Grain, and wherein we had better Crops, and greater Plenty, than in the Years ſince 1726, more Grain was Imported to the Value of 2646 l. *per Annum*, than was Exported, both of Grain and its Produce put together; what muſt be our Caſe ſince the Year 1726? about which Year our hard Times began, and ſince that Year we had for the moſt Part very bad Crops, eſpecially in the North, where the greateſt Want has generally been! The Produce of two or three good Years was ſoon eat up by the Scanty ones, and gave but ſhort Relief. Ever ſince our Diſtreſs has been on the growing Hand, 'till this Year has brought it to the greateſt Height. If any thing of Grain, or its Produce was Exported ſince 1726, it was certainly but little; or perhaps none, but what was for Sea-faring Men and Paſſengers; and its likely not all that neither, for ſome Ships had part of their Bread of the Produce of the Plantations, or of what was imported from *Great Britain*. How great were the Sums expended for Grain and Meal ſince 1726, ſeeing almoſt every Year there has been an Importation of both, and ſome Years the Quantity very great ſince that Time. The Gentlemen of the *Dublin* Society have ſhown us how great a yearly Sum this takes from us. Now if the Ballance of Trade was turning againſt us in 1726, how muſt it be ſince that Year? when ſo much ready Caſh has been

draining from us to ſave our Lives! Where can then be our great Trade? Sure a Nation will never Flouriſh in Trade under ſeveral Years (and ſometimes ſucceſſive ones) of extreme Scarcity of Bread. It were to be wiſhed the Gentleman above-mentioned (who has the good of his Country at Heart.) wou'd ſhew the Ballance of our Trade for the 14 laſt Years, and particularly as to Grain and its Produce. It ſeems it wou'd be a dull account as to Trade in general, as I'm ſure it muſt on the Articles of Meal and Grain. But tho' our Trade ſhou'd in other Reſpects be tolerable; yet what Relief gets the Farmer by this, or the Poor? the far greater Number, and whoſe Subſiſtence muſt be chiefly by the Ground, and above all by the Staff of Bread.

I KNOW the Flouriſhing of the Linnen Trade, is a Subject for Declamation on our Happineſs; and that Sums of Money flow in upon us by that Buſineſs from *England*, and no doubt that Branch of Trade is valuable, and our Government deſerves Commendation for their Care about it, and the Encouragement they give for carrying on, and enlarging it. But as it's in a manner our only valuable Trade, (eſpecially in the North) ſo, 'tis hardly to be ſuppoſed that it can bear all the Weight that's laid on it; and particularly as to Rents and Tythes, (which we ſee keep Pace in advancing with that Buſineſs;) and for ſupporting the Luxury of many of our great Folks, at Home and Abroad. No doubt we draw a great deal of Money yearly from *England* for Linnens and Yarn: but if we compare our Remittances to *England*, to ſupport the Extravagance of ſo many of our Nobility and Gentry, who ſpend their Time and Fortunes there, and regard not the Welfare of their poor Country; we'll have no great cauſe to boaſt of the Ballance. The worthy Gentleman referred to, obſerves, 'That the Linnen and Hempen Manufactures, (and eſpecially the Linnen,) the only Trade we're unconfined in, ſaves us from being Bankrupts; which otherwiſe our Extravagance, and the Demands and Draughts upon us, wou'd have long ago brought about; our Exports upon which at a Medium for 8 Years preceeding Lady-Day 1727 amounts to 2847211 but as it's an Improving Manufacture, he hopes we may take the laſt of thoſe Years Exports, as the loweſt Medium for any ſucceeding Years along with the foregoing, which

'was

'was 342295 l.' *Eſſay, part* 1. *p.* 29, 30.——But then *ibid p.* 51, he ſhews that the Rents of Noblemen and Gentlemen reſiding in *England*, with ſeveral other Things he there mentions, that cauſe Remittances of Money to *England*, amounts yearly to 456000 l. which is 113705 l. more than what we get thence by the Linnen; nay 'tis near equal to the Value of our whole Exports to *England*, which at a Medium the 8 Years preceeding 1727, he ſhews to be yearly 473831 l. *ib. p.* 53. which is but 17831 l. more than what Money we remit to *England*; and conſidering that we pay the abſent Troops in *Gibraltar* 30000 l. a Year, (which he adds to our Remittances p. 51.) by what we pay to that Garriſon, 12169 l. more goes from us yearly than the total of our Exports to *England* amounts to, or the whole we get by our Trade with them. And allowing that the Linnen Trade is advanced ſince that Gentleman wrote, viz. in 1729, yet as he gives Allowance for ſucceeding Years in his ballancing our Trade as to that Buſineſs; there cannot yet be any great difference on that Head. It may thus appear that on the whole, we have no great Cauſe to boaſt of our Trade with *England*; ſeeing in the main we are Loſers: Whereas on the other Hand Mr. *Dobbs* ſhews fully in the following Pages, the great Advantages they have in their Trade by us.——Another Ingenious Gentleman, the Author of the Abſentees, *&c.* makes the Sums that are yearly drain'd from us by the above-ſaid Channels, more than Mr. *Dobbs* does, viz. 627799 l. p. 11. which of 'em is the juſteſt Computation, I can't determine; but ſure the leaſt of 'em is great enough for ſuch a poor Nation, labouring under many Hardſhips, and a narrow Trade, and even as to that, the far greater Part of it is carried on by Foreign Ships. And it may be preſum'd, the Number of thoſe that reſide out of the Kingdom, is not leſſen'd ſince thoſe Gentlemen wrote, or that they have had more Compaſſion on our miſerable State, but rather added to it, by ſuch a vaſt drain of Money from us in the Years we cou'd worſt ſpare it. I know 'tis loudly complain'd of, that we loſe ſo much yearly by theſe Abſentees; but whether due Endeavours are uſed to prevent it, our Gentlemen at Home are the proper Judges.

BUT after all (tho' I heartily Wiſh well to the Linnen

Trade,) it's worth Enquiry who are the greateſt Gainers by it; and I can't ſee that it's the Farmers. Many Dealers have indeed gain'd by that Buſineſs; and 'tis reaſonable they ſhou'd, for their Induſtry, and the Good they do to the Publick. But 'tis plain the Landlords and Clergy have the beſt part of the Gain by the Advancement of Rent and Tythe, that it has chiefly, if not ſolely, given an handle to. For did not Tenants, Labourers and Trades-men live as well or better; and were not the Poor as well Supplied before the Linnen Buſineſs, as now. It is plain at the Price of Bread, and Wages too, the Farmer who hath not a Family of Children, can propoſe little or no Advantage by hiring Hands for dreſſing and ſpinning Flax, and eſpecially if he muſt to Market for Proviſion. And oft-times when the Yarn is Spun, the Farmer cannot have what Benefit may be had by getting it Woven, but muſt to Market with it to preſerve the Cows. And tho' 'tis a Mercy that many make a bare Subſiſtence (which otherwiſe wou'd not live,) by ſpinning and ſelling Yarn; yet 'tis with no ſmall Difficulty in theſe hard Years, and eſpecially when Yarn happens to be at a low Price.

THERE's a Calculation Mr. *Dobbs* makes of the different Kinds of Goods Imported from p. 37. to 43. *Eſſay Part* 1. and which juſtifies his Remark as to our prevailing Luxury. A ſlight glance of ones Eye will let him ſee, that the Articles of Things imported that he refers to, and which tend to promote Luxury, are by far the heavieſt on us; and not ſuch Goods as are neceſſary, or that may turn to Advantage to our Trade. And *p.* 44, *&c.* he ſhews that many material Articles may be ſupplied at Home, were due Care taken: and *p.* 50 he ſhews our prevailing Luxury, by the Increaſe of the Import of ſuch Things, as tend to promote it, *Anno* 1726, and particularly by *French* Wines, whereof the Value of 26000*l.* more was imported that Year than formerly: (Hence it appears that a great Part of our Trade conſiſts in importing Things unneceſſary, or that tend to Debauch us.) And 'tis probable, notwithſtanding all our Hardſhips the paſt Years, the loud Complaints of Trade's declining, the almoſt ſtarving Condition of many, and the Difficulties that ly on the far greater Part in paying Rents, Tythes, *&c.* that our great Folks either Laity or Clergy, with many of the middling ſort

of

of People (who alſo run into Exceſs,) have not one jot retrenched their luxurious way of living. And till ſomething of this be done, it can hardly be expected that the bulk of 'em will be in a Condition (if they had the Inclination,) to compaſſionate the Miſeries of their Fellow Creatures, and duely to Regard the true and laſting Intereſt of their Country! Let any Man ſeriouſly conſider, what Mr. *Dobbs* has demonſtrated in many Places of his *Eſſay*, (which would be tedious to refer to,) as to the Luxury of many of the greater Sort, as to the Careleſſneſs and Idleneſs of many of the meaner Sort, (which, tho' a common and juſt Obſervation, yet, due means ſeem not to be uſed, to make ſuch more uſeful to themſelves and the Publick :) and as to the hard Circumſtances of Farmers by Rent, Tythe and ſhort Tenures: in ſhort as to the low Condition of the Country in general, (and which is more ſo now, than when he wrote, and which he has an Opportunity of knowing better by the Buſineſs he is concerned in,) and let him then ſhew what fine Things he cou'd ſay of our flouriſhing State. The Gentlemen of the *Dublin* Society have alſo Obſerved what we Suffer in Things of this kind, and particularly what vaſt Sums are expended by the Import of Things unneceſſary, or that promote Luxury; and that we might be furniſhed at Home in many Articles that drain away our Caſh. But what avails it that ſome Gentlemen ſhou'd point out our Maladies, and propoſe Remedies, if the Generality be ſo careleſs in applying them.

From what has been ſaid, it may appear pretty plain that Rents and Tythes are too high conſidering the Produce of our Ground, the lowneſs of our Trade and Circumſtances, and the general Diſtreſs that Farmers have been under for ſeveral Years, eſpecially in the North. But if we compare our ſelves with *England*, this will appear yet more plain. *England* is certainly much more populous than *Ireland* is; yet 'tis rarely but they have ſufficient for 'emſelves, and oft-times to ſpare, as in the late Years, when they have ſupplied ſeveral Parts in *Europe* with vaſt Quantities of Grain. But the Tenants there are in Heart, and tho' they labour Hard, yet they live Well: They have generally a ſure and long Tenure to Improve upon, and for the moſt part better Land than we have, at leaſt in moſt Part of our

northern Counties. And allowing their Rents and Tythes were much higher than ours proportionably, yet they abound in Money, and Flouriſh in a free and unconfined Trade to moſt Parts of the known World: and they have Markets generally at ſuch a Medium that Buyer and Seller can live. Gentlemen and Clergy cannot reaſonably think to have their Rents and Tythes equal, or near to thoſe of *England*; unleſs they cou'd firſt find means to get us (in proportion to the bigneſs of *Ireland*) as much Money, and as good a Trade as *England* hath. And no doubt were our Circumſtances in all Reſpects equal to theirs, we might bear equal Burdens with them. But how ſmall is the Allowance that we can afford towards the Publick, in compariſon with the great Fleets and Army that *England* can ſupport? Mr. *Dobbs*, *Eſſay Part* 2. *p.* 38. has a Computation of the annual Income of *England*, which he reckons may be 56 Millions, whereas the annual Income of *Ireland* is only 6 Millions and above an half. Now ſuppoſe the yearly Income of *Ireland* was fully 7 Millions, yet (according to this Computation) that of *England* wou'd be juſt 8 Times as much, and conſequently they are 8 times Richer than we are in *Ireland*, and a little more.

I Observe in a late Mapp that *England* is reckoned at 58481 ſquare Miles, and *Ireland* 27487, and conſequently *England* is as large again as *Ireland* and 3507 ſquare Miles more; or the half of *England* is larger than the whole of *Ireland* by 1750 ſquare Miles. Hence it follows, that as *England* is full 8 Times richer than *Ireland*, it may pay 8 Times more Rent and Tythe than *Ireland*; or that the half of *England* being more than the whole of *Ireland*, and alſo 4 Times Richer, and ſome more; therefore the half of *England* may pay 4 Times as much Rent and Tythe as the whole of *Ireland*, and alſo ſomething over. Or, to take this in another View, that the whole of *Ireland* ſhou'd pay 8 Times leſs Rent and Tythe than the whole of *England*: or, which is the ſame thing, that the whole of *Ireland* ſhould pay 4 Times leſs Rent and Tythe than the one half of *England*, in proportion to the Wealth and Bounds of each. But 'tis much to be queſtion'd if Rents and Tythes in *England* be thrice, or even twice as high as they are in *Ireland*, whereas they ſhould be 8 Times, anſwerable to their yearly Income; or that the

the half of *England* pays thrice, or twice as much as all *Ireland*, tho' the Proportion wou'd be 4 Times anſwerable to the Bounds and Wealth of the half. I have heard a Gentleman of good Knowledge, who has been ſeveral Times in *England*, ſay, that Rents in *Ireland*, are generally higher than in *England*, except about *London*, or other great Towns; and there's Ground for believing ſo, ſeeing many of their Leaſes in *England* are of a long Standing, and therefore granted on much eaſier Terms than they might be now. However as to what has been obſerved, I cannot ſee but it will hold in the main, taking one Kingdom with the other in general, and not confining the Compariſon to ſome particular Parts. It were to be wiſhed that both Gentlemen and Clergy (eſpecially ſuch as are Abſentees from their Country Pariſhes, and live at their Eaſe elſewhere,) wou'd for their own ſakes (if not for the Publick) be at more Pains to acquaint themſelves better with the State of the Country. Thus they might be aſcertained, how hard the moſt of Tennants labour, how meanly they generally fare; how poorly many of them are clothed, and lodge, and ly far worſe. Thus they might come to know (eſpecially the Clergy, by viſiting them in their Families) that the generality are in, at beſt nigh to a broken Condition! That as many are not already able to pay high Rents and Tythes, and particularly what they owe, ſo more will be ſoon diſabled, unleſs there be a ſpeedy and happy Turn in our Affairs, and Providence ſend us much better Times; and the Loſs will at the laſt come on themſelves. And as we have too many Beggars already, (and ſome that were in tolerable Circumſtances, and paying Rent have been forced to that Courſe this Year;) ſo, in ſuch a Caſe we ſhall have a vaſt Increaſe of them.

But to conſider the Tythes a little more particularly, which People reckon the greateſt Grievance; ſeeing, they are riſen near, if not in many Places equal to what Rents were in our Fore-fathers Days: Nay, in ſome Livings doubled, in perhaps little more than 20 Years paſt, or even fewer than 20, tho' this has been the Time of our growing Calamities: and beſides they are generally levied with more Severity, than Tennants are treated with for their Rents. And 'tis to be obſerv'd, that the ſevere exacting

acting of them is one great Hinderance to Induſtry and Improvement; for ſuppoſe a Man wou'd at a conſiderable Labour and Expence, bring in, or fit for Culture a Quantity of coarſe or uſeleſs Ground, I can't underſtand that he will be allowed any Eaſe for ſome Years as to the Tythe; (but muſt conſtantly pay the full Value,) tho', I'm aſſured, 'tis common in *England* for the Parſon to allow the Farmer ſome Years Tythe in ſuch a Caſe. Or ſuppoſe the Ground already tilled, and a Farmer improve it to better Advantage; if the Clergy muſt run away with the Tenth of his additional Labour and Expence, giving the Man no Allowance in the Tythe; who will be at the Pains to improve Lands on ſuch hard Terms? How unreaſonable muſt this be? And that in ſome Reſpects on account of the Landlord, who can claim no more than his covenanted Rent, thus not only an induſtrious improving Tennant is diſcouraged, but a great Detriment is done to the Publick.——If we Ballance the Clergy in *England* with thoſe in *Ireland*, 'tis eaſy to ſee on what Side the Scale of Advantage turns; the Livings in *Ireland* being generally much better than thoſe in *England*. The Pariſhes in *Ireland* are 2293, now conſidering how many of the Clergy have Pluralities of Livings, ſome where Curates ſerve, (and ſome of thoſe in a low enough way) and others ſine Cures, who get the Wages, and yet are oblig'd to do nothing, either of 'emſelves or by Proxy; 'tis probable we may ſubſtract 500 from the Total, which wou'd make the Number of Clergymen in *Ireland* 1793. And tho' ſome Part of the Tythes are in ſeveral Places in the Hands of Laymen; yet 'tis no contemptible Allowance, for ſuch a ſmall Number of Men to have ſtill, nigh the Tenth of the Subſtance of the Nation; and ſome are apt to think all things conſidered, more: and eſpecially tho' ſo many of 'em get the Fleece, yet they do not feed the Flock.——The Pariſhes in *England* are near 10000, whereas inſtead of 2293 it wou'd take near 5000 in *Ireland*, to bring the Pariſhes in the one near to an Equality with thoſe of the other, in Proportion to the different Magnitude of each Kingdom; which ſhews how much more bulky and beneficial Livings are in *Ireland* than in *England*: and allowing a proportional Number of Pluralities in the one, as in the other, the Caſe will be

ſtill

ſtill much the ſame. Had we 5000 Pariſhes in *Ireland*, and for the Sake of Pluralities, allowing only 4500 Incumbents or Miniſters, the Proviſion wou'd not be bad, and they needed not ſcrew the Laity ſo exceſſively with the Tythes, much leſs when they are not half that Number: And there wou'd be ſtill Encouragement enough for Men of Learning and Merit, if they cou'd be ſucceſsful enough againſt Intereſt, to procure the Pluralities and better Benefices. And were the overgrown Livings divided, more Gentlemen might make handſome Proviſion for more of their younger Children; and it wou'd alſo be a Bar in the Way of what is ſo commonly complained of, namely the Run of Clergymen from *England* to enjoy the better Benefices. Or, (as the Tythes are abundantly ſufficient for the Number, ſo,) a more equal Dividend, wou'd afford a better Hazzard for more Men of Merit, and wou'd put ſeveral that ſtruggle under Hardſhips, in a more comfortable Situation.

BUT that I be not here miſtaken, I doubt nothing that 'tis a Goſpel Inſtitution, that ſome certain Perſons in an orderly Way ſhou'd miniſter in Things ſacred to the Chriſtian People; and that they alſo ſhou'd have a ſufficient Maintenance, and be kept as free as may be from ſuch diſtracting worldly Cares, as wou'd hinder 'em in their great, and ſacred Work. But as Tythes were given in popiſh Times to the Prieſts, for the Salvation of the Donor's Soul, and the Souls of his Anceſtors; and for that end confirmed by the Prince, as appears by King *Stephen*'s Grant of 'em: it may ſeem a little hard, that, when the Service they were deſign'd for is exploded by Proteſtants, yet, the Reward or Wages ſhou'd be continued. And tho' the Legiſlature hath continued them for the Support of a Proteſtant Clergy, yet, 'tis no want of deference to Rulers, to complain of 'em when they tend to Oppreſſion, or, of the Hardſhips People ſuffer by them in the preſent Management. And no doubt the Ligiſlature may redreſs the Abuſe of 'em, or remove the Grievances caus'd by them, as well as to grant them at firſt. The Parliament took away *Peter Pence* and *Abby Lands*, tho' they were applied to ſacred Uſes in Popiſh Times, as well as the Tythes were. And who will ſay that the Parliament might not take them away, as well as grant them at firſt; ſtill allowing

allowing a ſufficient Maintenance to the Clergy: as ſuppoſe a certain Rate on the Pound Rent, and ſomething on Noblemen, Gentlemen, Lawyers, Merchants, *&c.* tho' there wou'd be difficulty in fixing ſuch a Method; yet who will ſay that the Wiſdom of the Legiſlature cou'd not effect it, or that their Goodneſs and Equity might not prompt them to it? As this wou'd relieve the Country of great Bondage and Trouble, and prevent many Law-Suits; (which on the head of Tythes are frequently the moſt expenſive, tedious and oppreſſive, of any other Kind of Suits; and in which, ſometimes the Clergy feel the Expence:) ſo, it wou'd give great Eaſe to the Clergy, put them more in the good Graces of the Laity, eſpecially of Farmers, than when they are yearly taking the Tenth or more, even conſidering ordinary Expence and Induſtry; but perhaps a 5th or 6th, where a Man improves at an Extraordinary Expence. Thus alſo the Clergy wou'd be leſs incumbered, better fitted for their ſpiritual Functions, and more able to do Good to the Souls of Men. In ſome ſuch Method that the Legiſlature ſaw fit, the Clergy's Maintenance might be as good as it is; and if it ſhou'd not, yet, if it were ſufficient; what Cauſe of Complaint? as they are bound by the Precepts of Charity and Compaſſion, ſo they might bear a greater Share in the Time of common Diſtreſs, than, for any Thing that appears, they have done. And Providence cou'd bleſs leſs, to make it anſwer all the Ends of Life; which might the rather be expected, when they wou'd enjoy it with the Bleſſings and Satisfaction of many Thouſands of poor People.

I WOU'D not enter into a Diſpute, about the Clergies Claim to Tythes now, by a Divine Right, taken from the Right the *Levites* had to them by the *Moſaick* Law, under the *Jewiſh* œconomy. Only I wou'd fain know, what other probable Way there was for ſupporting that Order of Men among the *Jews*, who were Planted in a Country exceeding Fruitful: Their Flocks and Grain, were almoſt their All, or their great Support; and therefore that which anſwered beſt for ſupporting the *Levitical* Tribe. How little were they concerned with the Countries about 'em in a Way of Trade or Dealing? So as to make any great Addition to their Subſtance, or enrich themſelves by Commerce; or, even gain themſelves a tolerable Support that

Way.

Way. Conſidering their Circumſtances and Situation, as a kind of Peculiar People, in a great Meaſure hedg'd in from their Neigbours, and living on the Product of their own Country; what more rational way of Supporting their Clergy? even tho' *Moſes* had been only a wiſe Lawgiver (and he has been owned for ſuch, even by ſome Heathens) and not under a Divine Conduct in the Laws he gave them. And as they had not much Merchandizing among them, nor a Number of variout Trades and Artificers, (needful to carry on Commerce,) ſo, the Prieſts and *Levites* were, in many Caſes their Judges and Lawyers; and, even their ſupreme Judicature, the Sanhedrim, was partly made up of Prieſts and probably *Levites* too; which, might in part entitle them to the Suſtenance allowed.—— They were a People that had not opportunity of making great Fortunes by Traffick, nor of getting great Wealth, growing Grand, or procuring Eſtates, by ſuch means, or Buſineſs, or Imployments as with us. But as on their original Settlement, every Family had its proportion of Land, (and, even in their worſt State, in the main it continued thus;) ſo, when any was oblig'd to ſell his Patrimony, it was, according to their Conſtitution, only for a limited Time; and he had a Right to Redeem it ſooner than the Jubile, if he cou'd; or one near of kin to him might redeem it. Thus it appears, that, as on the *Jews* original Settlement, ſome few of 'em had not the whole, or greateſt Part of the Lands; ſo, the Jubile was a bar to their purchaſing great Eſtates, or, at leaſt to their being long continued in one Hand, or Family. It alſo appears, that their Wealth being chiefly the Produce of their Ground, the Tythes (conſidering their civil Conſtitution and Settlement,) were the moſt proper if not only Way, of Supporting thoſe that miniſtred in Things ſacred; and alſo, that this Maintenance was not laid on ſome, who held their Lands from others on hard Terms, but was equally proportioned among 'em, according to the Portion of Land more or leſs, that each Family enjoyed.

But what ſays this to a Chriſtian Country, where Commerce with other Countries is cultivated, and for that end Arts and Trades ſtudied and practiſed, (which are the Source of Wealth,) with ſuch other Means and Imployments as render many Great and Rich; and on which, it wou'd ſeem

ſeem very reaſonable, that a greater Share of the Clergy's Maintenance ſhou'd be laid, and not almoſt the whole Weight of it on poor Tennants. It wou'd been exceeding hard for the *Jewiſh* Laity to have paid the Tenths to their Clergy, if they had paid as high Rents to Landlords, as Tennants do with us; and in the mean time thoſe Landlords, with others who by their way of Living and Buſineſs, had the greateſt Affluence, paid little or nothing!—— And, ſuppoſe Landlords ſet their Lands ſo much cheaper, as Tythes are likewiſe to be paid by the Tennant; yet, this is of no force in comparing our Caſe in paying Tythes. with the Caſe of the *Jews*, who had not Rent to pay, and therefore might the better pay Tythes. And thoſe among 'em who might perhaps have held ſome Lands from their great Men, for ſome Acknowledgement in the Produce of the Ground, or otherwiſe; yet cannot be ſuppoſed to have born the whole of the Tythes, and thoſe to whom the Ground belonged be kept Free. No doubt our Landlords ought to conſider the Weight of the Tythes on ſetting their Lands; but there's ground to fear, it's not duely done. And as Tythes muſt be paid, their moderating the Rents wou'd ſet the Clergy a good Example, who ſeem ſo backward to begin it. But, ſuppoſe Tythes had not been given to the Clergy in Times of Popery, nor continued to them by Law in Proteſtant Times, (but ſome other Mean of their Support fixed on by the Legiſlature;) it may yet be queſtioned, whether Rents at this Day had been higher than they are. And it may be alſo queſtion'd, if Rents had been as high, and the Opportunity of making Profit, or Means of living Great, and advancing in the World, been on an equal Footing as now with us, in our fore-Fathers Days, when the Tenths were granted to the Clergy, whether the Weight of their Maintenance in that Caſe, wou'd been laid ſo much on Husbandmen, and ſo little of it on others.

But as for the *Jews* who had not Rents to pay, nor lived in a Way of enriching 'emſelves like moſt other Nations; what more equitable way of Supporting the Tribe of *Levi*, who had no Portion of the Lands, than by all contributing equally to it, in Proportion to the Lands they Poſſeſſed? allowing *Moſes* to be a wiſe Lawgiver, adapting his Laws to the Situation and Circumſtances, he deſign'd

ſign'd that People to be in, and which, he had ground to apprehend might be contiued for ſome Generations; (as it was with reſpect to *Lycurgus* fixing Laws for the *Lacedemonians*:) this Method ſeems the moſt proper and eligible. Whereas if we ſuppoſe the *Jews* Conſtitution and Settlement in *Canaan*, was (as there's good reaſon to apprehend,) under a divine Direction; then we may conclude, that their paying Tythes as appointed, was the beſt and fitteſt Metthod of ſupporting the *Levites*, even conſidering their Civil Conſtitution, their Circumſtances, and manner of living. In this view, 'tis ſcarcely to be ſuppoſed, conſiſtent with the divine Goodneſs and Wiſdom, (ſhewn ſo much in favour of that People:) that *Moſes* ſhou'd lay their Clergy's Maintenance ſolely on the Produce of the Ground; if he had not foreſeen, or known, that agreeable to their Conſtitution, and the peculiar Circumſtances they were to be in, (as a People by the Divine Appointment diſtinguiſhed from other Nations,) they were in a Situation, not to be much concerned in, or make ſuch Benefit by Trade, or other ways of living, as others did; or that they cou'd bear any conſiderable Expence on account thereof. Whereas had it been otherwiſe, that their way of living was to depend much on Trade, or a Proſpect that they might enrich themſelves thereby, or, that ſome among 'em, by their Conſtitution had been poſſeſſed of the Lands, and others to have rented thoſe Lands of them; and alſo others to have had means of living, and Imployments whereby they cou'd make vaſtly more, than thoſe who only tilled the Ground, and managed Cattle; (for thoſe that were of theſe Kinds among the *Jews*, (who don't appear to have great Benefits on that Score,) having their Proportion of Land, conſequently ſtill paid their Proportion of Tythes:) had Things been thus, or a Proſpect that they wou'd been thus; 'tis hard to conceive, that the whole Support of the *Levitical* Tribe ſhou'd been laid on the toiling Husbandman; and that thoſe of better Circumſtances, of Fortune and Figure, or that had a more eaſy and profitable Way of Living, been in a Manner kept free of the Burden.

Now this is our Caſe; the Support of the Clergy lies in a Manner ſolely on Husbandmen! And yet how few of thoſe who follow no other Buſineſs but farming, af-

ter all their Toil and Care, can make any more than a bare Subſiſtance of it? Where one here and there, can make ſome little Benefit; Numbers can hardly get any kind of tolerable Support, eſpecially in theſe pinching Times. And yet, generally ſpeaking, an ordinary Farmer, that labours under great Difficulty to pay his Rent, anſwer the Demands needful to carry on his Buſineſs, and maintain a ſmall Family, ſhall pay more to the Clergy, (and it often happens that he never ſaw his Parſon, who lives at a Diſtance from him;) than a Nobleman or Gentleman, perhaps of ſome Thouſands a Year; tho' ſuch want not the Clergy's good Offices in their Families, and on other Occaſions. A Lawyer ſhall raiſe an immenſe Fortune, or add to the Fortune he had, and yet, pay but a ſmall Pittance towards the Clergy's Maintenance! In like Manner Phyſicians, Merchants and Dealers, and even ſometimes Tradeſmen, will get up in the World, or above it; and yet little or nothing for the Clergy: A Collonel, or General, or ſuch as have the higheſt Poſts in the State, or Civil Offices with liberal Allowances for their Service, and, who perhaps has a large Eſtate to boot, ſhall pay but a Trifle to the Clergy out of both; and ſome who have the greateſt Fortunes, or Incomes, perhaps nothing! Near the whole Load muſt ly on poor Farmers, whatever their Circumſtances be; and thoſe of eaſier Ways of Living, and of manifold greater Abilities, not lighten the Burden with one of their Fingers: The Clergy have then the greateſt Reaſon from Intereſt, as well as Duty, to love and regard, to encourage and inſtruct this meaner, but profitable Part of People, ſeeing their Support depends ſo much on them: Yea, and Landlords alſo to encourage them, by making their Condition as eaſy as reaſonably might be expected, ſeeing that without 'em their Eſtates wou'd turn but to a poor Account.——And as the aforeſaid Sorts of Perſons, are with us in a Manner entirely exempted from ſupporting the Clergy, (unleſs in great Towns, where their Maintenance muſt be laid on the Houſes or Inhabitants;) ſo, it may be obſerved, that the Fruitfulneſs of *Canaan*, might more eaſily allow the Tenths to the *Levites* (than with us) and enough ſtill remain to anſwer all Wants and Demands of thoſe who paid them.

THERE's no Deſign here to favour any levelling Scheme, the

the good of Society (if not its very Being) muſt depend on a Diſtinction of Perſons, and Offices, and Circumſtances: And let thoſe in ſuperior Stations, or that have larger Poſſeſſions, or better Proviſions, than the Bulk of their Neighbours, (which muſt ſtill be the meaner,) enjoy them unenvied, and do much Good with 'em. I wou'd only plead for thoſe in lower Life, (eſpecially Farmers by whoſe Induſtry and Toil the greateſt do live;) who, in their Station are equally uſeful with any others for the common Good; and, who are certainly unequally yoked, when they bear the far greater Part of the Burden in the Clergy's Support.——How can it be in Reaſon, in Equity and Charity, that Noblemen and Gentlemen of opulent Fortunes, and in Proportion to their Fortunes, they who have leſs; that Lawyers and Phyſicians, Merchants and Dealers, Gentlemen in the Army, the Revenue and Exciſe, ſuch whoſe Offices and Imployments, entitle them to handſome Rewards and Salaries; in ſhort ſuch as have Occupations that are profitable, and in their Way of living have more Eaſe and Plenty, and (at leaſt the Proſpect, or) Opportunity, of making more Advantage, and of ſupporting themſelves and Families, much better than Farmers generally can do, (and that in the beſt of Times,) ſhou'd not contribute more to the Clergy's Maintenance than they do? Or that it ſhou'd be ſo very difficult a Thing in the Legiſlature, to proportion it in ſome more juſt, equal or reaſonable Way on Men of Abilities? on the aforeſaid Kinds of Buſineſſes, Occupations or Offices, And eſpecially when the Diſtreſſed State of their Country, the grievous Exactions of the Tythes, the burdenſome Suits they oftentimes give riſe to, the Poverty and Inability of moſt Farmers require it ſo much; tho' without them, or, if they be generally in a broken Condition, all Buſineſs muſt in a little ſink, and the Nation thereby go to Wreck! A ſufficient Maintenance being ſecured to the Clergy, what juſt Cauſe wou'd they have to complain? Even, tho' it were not in the Way that Uſage, at firſt, and Law afterwards confirmed it to them. And were it even leſs, in the low and diſtreſſed State of their Country, it might be expected on ſeveral Conſiderations that they might bear it. It's in their Power (if they will be ſo kind and compaſſionate,) to eaſe the Diſtreſſed by falling the Tythes. But

ſure 'tis in the Power, and the Right of the Legiſlature to give, and ſecure the Clergy's Maintenance, in the Way that may beſt anſwer the Publick Good. To ſuppoſe that any Thing in the Nation, that is diſtreſſing to the far greater Part of the Subjects, (as Tythes in the preſent Management certainly are, and require at leaſt to be more fixed;) can have no Remedy applied to it by the Legiſlature; nor be put on ſuch a Footing, as the Diſtreſs may in ſome Meaſure, be leſſened, is ſuch a Reflection on the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Government, as none ſhou'd readily give into.——It were to be wiſhed, that thoſe of ſuperior Circumſtances and Knowledge, who are of the Legiſlature, (and 'tis altogether reaſonable they ſhou'd be ſuch, and act as may be moſt for publick Good:) wou'd conſider themſelves and ſuch as they are, in an even Ballance, and not be too ſelfiſh, or ſway'd by Intereſt (eſpecially in a ſmall Matter,) to keep all the Load ſtill on thoſe, who are leaſt able to bear it: and as they are likely to be render'd altogether unable to do it; in that caſe, Men of Eſtates, will in the Iſſue, be as great Loſers as the Clergy.

A DIFFICULTY may be here rais'd, namely that any Alteration with reſpect to the Tythes, or any other Method than the preſent, for allowing and ſecuring the Clergy's Maintenance, might endanger the Church Eſtabliſhment, or, at leaſt, might raiſe ſome Commotions in both Church and State. But why might it not be otherwiſe, (and no doubt wou'd,) if all Men were govern'd by a ſocial and Chriſtian Temper, and not too much by Intereſt and partial Views; and eſpecially when there's ſo ſtrong a Plea on the Side of Equity; and, which wou'd leſſen the Diſtreſſes of the far greater Part of the Nation, and of thoſe too, as uſeful in their Stations, as any, and on whom all Buſineſs, and the flouriſhing State of the Publick ſo much depend. It is not here pleaded that the Clergy ſhou'd want Law to ſecure their Temporalities, only that their Maintenance might be laid more equally, or at leaſt that it might be reduced to ſome Certainty, (even in the preſent Way they have it,) that their Demands on poor diſpirited Farmers may not ſtill increaſe, and grow more unſupportable: And as for their ſacred Office, they may truſt the BIBLE with reſpect to that. Sure, no Commotion need be feared from the bulk of People, (all who ſubſiſt by the Labour

bour of the Ground,) on ſuch an Head, ſeeing it wou'd tend to their Eaſe and Benefit. And it wou'd be beneath Gentlemen, and ſuch as abound in Affluence, to raiſe any Commotion on ſuch an Account; when the Ties of Humanity, as well as Chriſtianity, and, I may add good Policy too, ſo much require their Sympathy with, and Compaſſion towards their Fellow Creatures, Fellow Chriſtians and Fellow Subjects; and when retrenching a ſmall Thing in their Way of living, wou'd anſwer that valuable End, of eaſing thoſe in Diſtreſs. And, as nothing in this (I apprehend,) tends to endanger the Church, or deprive the Clergy of a ſure Maintenance; ſo, certainly the foregoing Ties ſhou'd bind them more ſtrongly than other Men, nor wou'd they have any juſt Handle of raiſing Commotions on ſuch an Account. ——— As the Chriſtian Church cou'd not expect Tythes in its pureſt Age, but ſubſiſted without 'em under a Variety of Diſcouragements and Troubles; nor yet were they granted for the Clergy's Maintenance, when it came under a Civil Sanction, and had the Favours of Emperors and great Men heap'd on it; (and yet all the while the Clergy had a Support,) ſo 'tis plain Tythes were given to the Clergy in the degenerate and ſuperſtitious Times of the Antichriſtian Church. Now where had been the Harm to a Proteſtant Church, if they had been taken away at the Reformation; and a proper and ſufficient Maintenance ſecured to the Clergy, in ſuch other Way as the Government thought fit? There are Church Eſtabliſhments well enough ſecured, and the Clergy well enough ſupported, where the Tythes are not in their Hands. In *North Brittain* the Tythes are in the Hand of the Landlords, who pay the Miniſters Maintenance: And in *Holland* the Miniſters are paid by the Government. Thus the People are under no Temptation of looking on their Clergy, as yearly ſqueezing and haraſſing them; nor are the Clergy under the Snare of acting ſo, or, at leaſt of being ſo much diſtracted from their main Work, by ſeeking to raiſe themſelves and Families.

But to conſider Tythes in their preſent way of Management, is a point that will ſhew how heavy a Burden they are on Farmers! This will appear from what was ſaid, more particularly with reſpect to Rents; but ſeveral Things in

in the Tythes, the Severity and Methods of bringing 'em in, render them much more grievous than Rents: So, that it may be ſaid of 'em like *Rehoboam*'s Words, *The Clergies little Finger is thicker than the Landlords Loins.* As they are generally much above the tenth Part of the Rent, ſo, (as hath been obſerved) they are a great check to Induſtry, which is ſo much wanted, ſeeing our Produce is moſtly ſo ſmall; eſpecially as the Farmer hath no Allowance, but he muſt pay fully to the Value, as well as his Neigbour, who is not perhaps, at the half, or third Expence in his Labour. And not only does the Farmer give the Tenth of what pays his Rent, labours his Farm, ſupports his Family, and hires his Servants with other Contingencies, but the Tenth of his Seed. It were but reaſonable the Clergy wou'd grant ſome Allowance on that Head; and certainly, in juſtice, the Farmer ought to be allowed fully the Value of his Labour, even, when he is but at ordinary Expence by labouring in the common way; ſeeing the Tythe is the Incumbent's Property without any Pains or Expence on his Part.——But a great part of the Miſchief and Miſery the Country labours under by Tythes, is the trafficking made of them by farming. Not only needy Rooks, ſome of 'em, hardly fit to be entruſted with other Buſineſs, are made the Inſtruments of Oppreſſion; but Men of tolerable Circumſtances, who might live more comfortably and uſefully by ſome other way of dealing: Nay, even ſometimes, Men of Good Fortunes take up the homely Office of a Tythe-Farmer, to ſqueeze the Poor for 'em-ſelves and the Clergy! A Man, whoſe Fortune perhaps is ten times the Value (or more) of the Incumbent's living he farms, is thus imploy'd. This Office ſeems mean in Gentlemen, eſpecially, when either they cannot by farming too high, or will not through a covetous Diſpoſition, ſhew that Tenderneſs that an almoſt impoveriſhed Country calls for. And this is not all, for, even ſome Clergy-men turn Tythe-Farmers! Some managing themſelves, and ſome ſetting again to Underlings! an Office that the Prieſthood under the Law don't appear to have meddled in; and I'm ſure 'tis not founded on the New Teſtament. The Evil of this Practice is obvious, for each of 'em muſt have ſomething by the Bargain, and the poor Farmer muſt ſtill pay the Reckoning.——And then the Severty of exacting,

acting, and of levying Tythes, is no ſmall Hardſhip, beſides the heavy Suits they ſometimes give riſe to. How many are haraſſed, if they come not up to the Tyth-Maſter's Terms? and eſpecially in our hard Years; ſome, who as ſoon as their Grain was ready, made a little of it, to be Bread for their Family (and perhaps to get out of the Market too,) and to cut down their Harveſt: here was an Handle, and was Improven to ſcrew a Man up, or be ſued for Subſtraction of Tythes; tho' Neceſſity put him on uſing a part before he agreed for his Tythe. Abundance of People, (and ſome little better than Objects of Charity,) are put to Expence by Arreſtments and Summonſing; and even ſome creditable Farmers are thus uſed, where payment wou'd be ſure, if ſome little Time was allowed. Others have their Goods levied, when their Families are little better than ſtarving. The Tythe-Farmer will tell you, he cannot help it, he is ſorry for it, and is ſenſible that many he hath to deal with are in a miſerable Condition; but he muſt pay at his Day. Even ſome Tythe-Farmers complain, as loud as any of the low State of the Country, the Height of the Tythes, and the Severety of the Clergy; that they are wearied with the Buſineſs they can make ſo little of, and out of heart with meddling in it; tho' ſtill there are enough to do it.

But 'tis ſaid, Why ſhou'd not the Clergy improve their Tythes as far as they can, as well as Landlords do their Rents? But let this Improvement be proportioned to the low State of the Times, and the Abilities of poor People. And what if Rents be too high? The Bible tells the Clergy, and from it they ſhou'd tell others, that can't or don't read it 'emſelves, *Thou ſhalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil.* The Landlords Conduct is no Rule for a Proteſtant Clergy, who are, neither to take, nor deliver Things implicitly. More Tenderneſs ſhou'd be ſhewn by the Clergy than other Men, tho' too many of them copy after a woful Inſtance to the contrary in our Bible, *viz.* That of the Prieſt and *Levite*, *Who neglected their diſtreſſed Neighbour, when the tender* Samaritan *ſhew'd him the utmoſt Compaſſion.* But what ſhall become of poor Farmers, if they be grinded between Landlord and Parſon, as between two Milſtones, and as it happens in other Caſes, the one blaming the other. If Landlords exact too much, the Clergy

ſhou'd

ſhou'd ſhew 'em their Duty, and endeavour to reclaim them both by Inſtruction and Example: If the Clergy are in the Fault, the Laity wou'd do well to ſhame them out of it; if not by Inſtruction, (which might not be well taken, as invading their Province) yet, by ſhewing more Tenderneſs, where it's ſo much wanted.——But hath not the Law given the Clergy a Right to the Tythes, and provided Means for their ſecuring them? no doubt it hath; but the Complaint (except with Quakers) is not ſo much about the Right, as the extravagant Height they're raiſed to, above what Peoples Circumſtances, the Hardſhips of the Time, or their Value will allow, and the ſevere Methods of getting 'em paid. The Bible and Conſcience ſhou'd be caſt in the Ballance with the legal Right, and direct men in theſe things, and eſpecially when Complaints are ſo general, and I'm afraid too juſt. The Clergies exorbitant Demands on the Laity, is not what only the meaner Sort are ſenſibly feeling, but they have touched ſome of the better Figure: and, even our Honourable Houſe of Commons have had Cauſe to Notice it with ſome Reſentment, as appears from the Report of the Committee of that Houſe, appointed to enquire into the Complaints made in ſome Parts of the Kingdom, on the head of Herbage, and the ſeveral Law Suits occaſioned thereby. This of Herbage has been in ſome Parts of the *North* pretty heavy, and much complained of: but of late, the Demands on that Head, had roſe ſo high in ſome of the grazing Counties, and touched Perſons of better Figure and Circumſtances, than in the *North*, that they withſtood this Claim of the Clergy, in near thirty, and ſome of 'em, very Expenſive Law Suits; and, (at leaſt) in ſome of theſe Suits, the Perſons concerned had paid an heavy Tythe for the ſame Farm, beſides the Herbage demanded, as appears by ſaid Report. By which Report it alſo appears, that the Severity of the Clergy in their Demands, was given as the Reaſon of ſeveral Proteſtants going off from the County of *Meath* to the Plantations, and of others reſolving to ſell their Effects, and follow them, if they ſhou'd be ſo haraſſed. And hath not alſo the Burden of the Tythes, been given as a principal Reaſon of their going to the Plantations, by a great Number of Proteſtants from all Parts of the *North*? The affair of Herbage

Herbage ſeems not now to make much Noiſe, perhaps the Clergy have leſſen'd their Demands; which is probably owing to a regard to the Legiſlature, or at leaſt, that by their taking the Matter more earneſtly at Heart, and regulating the Tythes in ſuch a manner, as the Clergy might be more confined in their Demands, the happy Fruits thereof might be extended to all parts of the Kingdom. But their eaſing poor People a little (if it were but while Times wou'd mend,) of their own Inclinations, as it wou'd be very acceptable, ſo it wou'd be more worthy and commendable in them.

Oftimes alſo the Farmer is under a conſiderable Hardſhip in agreeing for his Tythe; which, as it requires moſtly a yearly Bargain, puts him to loſs of Time and Expence, in attending on the Tythe-Maſter, which ſometimes is oftner than once, or twice before they can agree. And after all if a Bargain be not ſtruck, the Farmer is in danger of loſing the Seaſon of drawing home his Grain, and thereby ſometimes ſuffers Damage by the Weather or Cattle. Poor People complain on this head, that Tythe-Farmers give them unneceſſary Delays, and weary them out to gain their End: or if they leave the Tythe, they are in a new Danger, if it ſhou'd be damag'd, or loſt by any Accident. And ſometimes the Farmer is put to Trouble and Loſes his Time in paying his Tythe when he has got it ſcraped up, by the Tythe-Maſter's not attending to receive it, according to his Appointment, but he muſt attend another Day.

From what hath been ſaid, it may appear pretty plain that the State of *Ireland*, is at beſt but very low; that Multitudes in it, labour under very great Difficulties; that ſeveral of the paſt Years have been pretty calamitous, and that this preſent Year, has been conſiderably more diſtreſſing than any of the former hard Years. It's well known that Multitudes of poor Families have been under great Difficulty to ſubſiſt, and many of their Lives but barely preſerv'd, and that, very much in the uſe of what they gather'd for Food, through the Summer in the Fields; and what rendered their Caſe more pinching, was the Scarcity of Milk. And has not the Caſe of many Farmers (eſpecially in the *North*) been as diſtreſſing, as that of any other ſort of People? But what has been done for 'em?

'em? What have Landlords and Clergy, that live ſo much by them, done for their Relief? Suppoſe they wou'd not fall Rents and Tythes, expecting Times would mend, yet one wou'd think they might have done more than hath been done, for the Relief of ſuffering Farmers. No doubt ſeveral Gentlemen, and Clergymen too, conſiderably enlarg'd their Charity in our hard Years: But it wou'd been much better had their Tenderneſs been of a more extenſive Nature. The bulk of Farmers have ſuffered as much as any; but what has been done for them? Had Landlords forgiven (but even) one quarter's Rent, in two Years, and the Clergy a third of the Tythes; this wou'd enabled 'em to bought ſome part of that Bread, their pinched Families wanted; it had gained their Affections more, and convinced them of the Compaſſion of thoſe who abound in Plenty, and encouraged them patiently to hope for better Times.——But as this hath not been done, nor is likely to be done (tho' great Folks retrenching a little in their Equipage and Diverſions and way of living, wou'd make this no Loſs to them:) Yet ſtill ſome thing might been done. Had Gentlemen and Clergymen joined in a common Stock, (ſuppoſe in a County) proportionable to their Fortunes, and Livings, and imploy'd proper Hands to have laid out that Money where Markets were cheapeſt; and imported Grain or Meal, to be ſold at ſuch a Price as to preſerve their Stock: It wou'd have been of great Service to their diſtreſſed Country, and no Loſs to themſelves, only laying out a little Money for a while. This might have procured them a Bleſſing, not only for the Good done to the Poor, but alſo to the Farmers; and been alſo their own Intereſt, by ſaving ſo much in the Farmer's hand towards Rent and Tythe, when he had Proviſion at a lower Price. When Merchants import, they have a view to Profit, and 'tis reaſonable they ſhou'd have it: (and their care alſo, in our repeated diſtreſſing Times, is to be acknowledged.) But thoſe of Ability importing Proviſions in ſuch manner, wou'd be praiſe-worthy; and ſhewn the Sympathy they had with thoſe in Diſtreſs. Muſt it not be to the diſcredit of our great Folks, that, through the want of a compaſſionate or publick Spirit in ſome; the want of both, and alſo that they cou'd not ſpare from their Luxury in others; that ſomething of this kind was not

not fallen into through a Train of hard Seaſons? a Year of Scarcity may come unexpectedly on a Country; but a Continuance of them, (as it has been particularly in the *North*,) ſhou'd put thoſe in whoſe Power it is, to fall upon ſome relieving Expedients. Some have, to their Honour, laid out ſome Money, in ſome of our hard Years, for the Relief of the Poor, or to help their own Tennants: But how little has been done this way? or how few of thoſe of the moſt topping Circumſtances, either Laity or Clergy, have joined in ſo charitable a Work? Remarkable was the care of the old *Romans*, in providing and importing Corn in a publick manner, eſpecially in Times of Scarcity. It's related of one of 'em on ſuch an Occaſion, that being imployed in bringing Corn for the City in a Dearth; and the Weather being bad, he preſſed the Sailors notwithſtanding to put to Sea, telling them, *It was neceſſary to ſail, but not to live!* So great was his Regard for his Fellow Citizens! and ſhall Chriſtians (who have the ſtrongeſt Arguments for Compaſſion, for Tenderneſs and Charity) be outdone by *Heathens*? or ſhou'd not (at leaſt) an equal publick Spirit appear in the one, as in the other? and was it not a proper time for ſhewing ſuch a Spirit, and for exerting all the ſocial, and humane, and chriſtian Vertues? When the Produce of many Farms in ſome Years, if ſold, wou'd ſcarcely have paid Rent and Tythe: And how ſhall then ſuch Farmers ſubſiſt themſelves, or what ſtate can the Country in general be in, when it is thus with many!

It may appear to an impartial Conſiderer from what hath been obſerved in the former Pages, that the Maladies we labour under, (eſpecially in the North) wou'd require proper Remedies to be applied to them; leſt in ſome time, by a total Bankruptcy, it be not ſo eaſy to retrieve our Circumſtances. Tho' this wou'd require the Labour of one of ſuperior Abilities, yet as many things are very obvious to any one that will duely conſider the Matter, that may greatly conduce to leſſen, in ſome meaſure, our Difficulties; (and eſpecially as to Farmers) and as none can be blamed for his Inclination to ſerve the Intereſt of his Country and Fellow Subjects, tho' his Weakneſs in the attempt may be carp'd at; and alſo that ſome things mentioned may be improven by thoſe of better

Knowledge

Knowledge in Affairs, to ſome good Purpoſe; I ſhall venture to hint at a few Things that might probably contribute towards a better Situation of our Affairs.

As for the Hardſhips we have ſo frequently been under by the Scarcity of Bread, all the Remedy is, if Providence give us more Plenty for the Future, that we wou'd manage it well. And if there ſhou'd be more than ſufficient for an Annual Conſumption, it wou'd be prudent to keep it at home for worſe Times, at leaſt 'till ſome Stock was laid by for that End. And it wou'd appear that what we have ſo often met with, might caution us as much that way as any other Nation. And as it cannot be ſuppoſed that the Circumſtances of moſt Farmers will allow 'em to lay much by (if they even had to ſpare) wou'd Landlords take part of their Rents, as 'tis in *North Britain*, (eſpecially in times of Plenty) in Grain or Meal, it might turn to a good Account to themſelves, as well as to the Publick: and at ſome times might afford Relief to other Places, as we have had ſo often from that, where ſuch a Method is practis'd, tho' it be not one of the moſt fertile Countries ——But if Gentlemen wou'd not do this, yet might not they with Clergymen of opulant Livings join in a Fund (ſuppoſe one in a County) for erecting and furniſhing Granaries, if we ever be bleſs'd with Plenty again? What can be more for the publick Benefit, for the Encouragement of Farmers, and even ſecuring their Rents and Tythes? No Country ſeems to need this more than *Ireland*, where Seaſons are ſo uncertain, our Produce generally ſo ſmall, and markets ſo unequal. And thus the Money that goes abroad to preſerve our Lives might be kept at Home, Markets kept nearer a Medium, and all ſorts of Perſons better provided for. The inſtance of *Holland* might put thoſe of Ability among us on the Project of Granaries, which we never find wanting ſufficient Proviſion at Home, and often to ſpare, (as we know by ſad Experience) tho' it's moſtly imported from other Places. What can it be owing to but good Management that 'tis thus in *Holland*, which, being 9840 ſquare Miles,* is but a little more than one 3d. the Bigneſs of *Ireland*, and yet has twice our Number of Perſons, or rather more.

And as the other Provinces, generally ſpeaking, are more fertile than *Ulſter*; ſo, the Gentlemen in thoſe Parts wou'd

* *As it is laid in the aforeſaid Map.*

wou'd conſult the national Benefit, if they wou'd give more Encouragement to Tennants from the *North*, (eſpecially Proteſtants, which wou'd ſtrengthen that Intereſt) to ſettle on their Eſtates, than yet hath been done; which would alſo make the Linnen Manufacture of more extenſive Uſe and Benefit. It were eaſy to make it appear, that the *North* is too much crouded with People, conſidering the Produce of the Ground, the ſmalneſs of Buſineſs, or want of due Meaſures to employ Hands profitably. And is it not a Pity, that our People ſhou'd be hampered and almoſt ſtarved in the worſt Parts of the Nation, and the better Parts be ſo thinly inhabited, or much of 'em lying in a manner waſte? As the *North* is generally wanting Bread, ſo, if more of the other Provinces were tilled, there wou'd be vent for the Grain, or Meal at Home, where Numbers want, and require it; and thereby the Money that goes abroad for Proviſions, woud circulate in the Kingdom. This might be as much the Gentlemens own Advantage, as turning in a manner all their Lands under Stock. It wou'd ſtrengthen the National Intereſt, and with the Money, it wou'd keep People at Home, either from going to *America*, or to South or North *Britain* for Work; (as a great many do yearly,) ſeeing Tillage will require more Hands, than keeping Stock or Grazing does; and thereby will cauſe a proportionable Conſumption of greater Tillage. And Mr. *Dobbs* in his *Eſſay*, hath I think, made it plain that Tillage is much more profitable than Grazing: And by ſowing Graſs Seeds, an equal Number of Cattle, or near to it, might be grazed, tho' a much greater Quantity of Land were ploughed. And beſides Tillage is more ſafe in the Main, than Stock, either for Landlord or Tennant. And if a Year happen, that the *North* hath ſufficient to ſerve it ſelf, there's ſtill vent for Grain in other Parts: And the great Benefit *England* has made, by exporting Grain, and its Produce for ſeveral paſt Years, might put all ſorts of Perſons in the moſt fruitful Parts of *Ireland*, more on tilling their Lands; and eſpecially by proper Encouragement from the Government for exporting the Produce when it can be ſpared.

To promote and encourage Tillage in the Southren Parts, and to keep the *North* from that ſtarving Condition they have ſo often been in of Late, or of getting Proviſion

from abroad; it might perhaps be worth the Conſideration of Parliament, and might turn to as good Account as ſome Schemes they allow Money for, to fix a Fund for buying Oat-Meal, at ſome proper Port, in the *South* or *Weſt*, for ſupplying the *North*; ſuppoſe *Limerick*, about which the Lands are exceeding Good, and where it's ſaid, that Oat-Meal hath rarely (if we except this Year,) been above 3s. 6d. or 4. Shillings *per* Hundred; and the Convenience of Carriage by the *Shannon*, wou'd make it eaſier to bring conſiderable Quantities to that Port. If the Parliament would allow a proper Fund, and put it in the Management of ſuch Perſons as they ſaw fit, to buy Oat-Meal, there, or in other proper Parts; and have it brought to proper Ports in the *North*, and to have it there ſold, by ſuch Perſons as they wou'd appoint, at a Price that wou'd return the Money paid for it, with the coſt of Fraught, &c. it might turn to the great Benefit not only of the *North*, but to the Nation in general, and the Government be at no Loſs, only the laying out ſome Money for a while. Nay, the repeating of ſuch a Courſe as Occaſion required, or appropriating the Money for that End, 'till it wou'd appear there was no Occaſion, might ſave us great Sums, when Markets are too high in any part of the Kingdom, and any to ſpare in other Parts. And if ſome of the Money were ſunk in Time, or even all of it, yet, it will ſtill appear that the Nation is no loſer.——And conſidering our Numbers in the *North*, even if the Produce were generally Better, but eſpecially, as frequently it is ſo Bad; it ſeems, if not Needful, at leaſt Prudent, that more Care was taken to make timeous Proviſion for every Year: And thoſe that are of Ability, and that have the Intereſt of their Country at Heart, wou'd do well to lay down, and proſecute ſome Meaſures that may put us in ſome tolerable State. It may be preſumed that two or three plenty Years ſucceſſively, might be needful to bring this about. We have at preſent the Proſpect of a good Crop, if Providence preſerve it from Accidents; tho' we have ſeen ſome perhaps as good, turn but indifferently out. But ſhou'd it be fully preſerved, it is to be conſidered, (that as almoſt every Family wants in many Places, ſo) that there will be near a Year and a Quarter's Subſiſtence depending on it. So early, and ſo great a Conſumption, requires timeous

Conſideration

Conſideration: and eſpecially as the far greater Part, have not near the Quantity of Potatoes, they uſed to have formerly; and many of the Poor, who cou'd not purchaſe Seed (the Price being ſo high) got none at all ſet. Now what a Loſs will it be to us, and how much more Bread will it require for the Support of many Thouſands in *Ireland* who lived ſo much (nay, I may ſay cou'd hardly have lived at all otherwiſe) on that uſeful and favourite Root? nay, that has been ſo much a great Part of the Support of all ſorts of Perſons.

It may be of conſiderable Weight to encourage Gentlemen and Farmers in the Southren Provinces to ſow more, that generally in theſe hard Years, a great Quantity of Meal has been bought at *Newry*, and carried to the Parts more Northerly, even ſome as far as about *Coleraine*. Whatever has been of this Practice in ſome former Years, (and indeed there was a great deal, to the great relief of ſeveral Parts to the Northward of *Newry*;) yet this Year hath been the moſt extraordinary in that way of dealing. The number of Horſes that go to *Newry* three Days in the Week, and the quantity of Meal brought from it, is ſurprizing: And ſome Places in the adjacent Counties muſt been in a ſtarving and loſt Condition, had it not been for the Meal brought from thence. A ſmall Quantity only of that Meal, cou'd be the Produce of the Country next adjacent to *Newry*; but moſt of it came (and ſome at a conſiderable diſtance,) from the Counties to the Southward of *Newry*, on finding a ready Market for it there, and an high Price, occaſioned by the Scarcity in the Northren Counties.

No doubt, Rents depend on the Wealth and Trade of a Nation, with ſome other Circumſtances, as much as on the Nature of the Ground, if not more, as to their riſing or falling. And if the State of *Ireland*, be not better than what it appears to be from the above Obſervations, then Rents are generally too high; beſides the Diſcouragment that Tennants are moſtly under, by ſhort and uncertain Tenures. As this is a loſs to the Tennant, and the Publick, ſo in the Iſſue 'tis a loſs to the Landlord too; either by throwing his Land waſte for ſome time, or by breaking of Tennants, or being a Snare to live higher than the Uncertainty of his Rents ſhou'd

reaſonably allow him. And even if he ſhou'd get all that's promiſed, yet if poor Tennants be ſqueezed, if their Families be little better than Starving or half naked, or reduced to any pinching Difficulties, he has but a poor Gain! Is it not the Unhappineſs of *Ireland*, to be as liable to fluctuating and unequal Markets, to uncertain Seaſons, as well as uncertain Tenures, as any Country, if not more? As for the Seaſons, they muſt be left to Providence; but the other two are ſufficient to keep Landlords, and Tennants, and in ſome reſpects the Publick too, under a great Diſadvantage. In ſome meaſure all Buſineſs takes riſe from the Farmer; and can a Nation ever be in a ſure and flouriſhing Condition, where the Yeomanry is generally poor, low, and diſpirited, by high Rents and Tythes, and alſo buying much of their Proviſion: being alſo diſcouraged from Induſtry, and a due Improvement of their Farms, as being either Tennants at will, or having ſuch ſhort Leaſes, that it cannot be ſuppoſed a Man will do more, than what he cannot avoid, beſides the Danger of being racked, or giving place to another in a few Years.——Now wou'd Landlords alter their meaſures a little by moderating the Rents, and giving ſuch Leaſes as wou'd encourage Tennants to fix on a Certainty, and improve their Farms to the beſt Advantage; it wou'd be of great uſe to all Sorts of Perſons. What tends more to the flouriſhing State of *England*, than, that Tennants have ſure Tenures, are in heart, and have Ability to improve, and pay? And tho' they labour there, as hard as in any Place, yet they live well, and enjoy the Fruit of their Toil. If Tenures with us were ſure, even tho' the Rent was pretty high, it wou'd ſtill fix People better than in the preſent way: for a man wou'd be willing to give ſomething, above what he reckoned to be the value of a Farm, when he hath the proſpect of time to Improve on it, and to get in what he lays out that way. And if ſome Accidents ſhou'd reduce him, yet the value of his Leaſe wou'd ſtill ſecure the Landlord his Rent; and might perhaps yield alſo ſomething to himſelf: Whereas in the manner Farms are moſtly now, if a Tennant break, the Landlord muſt loſe, and the man becomes a Beggar, or little better. But if Gentlemen will not be perſuaded of the Inconveniences the Publick, as well as themſelves and

Farmers

Farmers are under at preſent, they may come to ſee it too much out of Time. And as for Proteſtant Tennants, thoſe who regard the Proteſtant Intereſt, wou'd do well to encourage ſuch, and to get them fixed in ſuch places where they are not, and where there's room to ſpare for them; and as popiſh Tennants by their way of living, generally may overbid Proteſtant ones, ſo, not for a trifling Advantage to give them the Preference, as ſome Landlords are apt to do. And thus many of 'em come in where Proteſtants have been, eſpecially ſuch as go to the Plantations. It's well known what a loud Complaint we had, of late, as to Proteſtants leaving the Country; but Landlords ſhou'd conſider, that the Preference many of 'em found given to Papiſts, contributed (among other Diſcouragements) to their taking that courſe; tho' it might eaſily be ſhewn, that Proteſtant Tennents are more ſafe, not only to the Publick, but to Landlords 'emſelves, even tho' Popiſh ones ſhou'd promiſe ſomething more.

THE common Complaint of our want of Timber, and that there's ſo little Improvement made that way, ſhou'd alſo be conſidered; and this alſo runs us into a conſiderable yearly Expence for Bark for Tanning. But how few Tennants are planting any at all? or what Encouragement is there given towards it, tho' Timber be ſo neceſſary? As the Expence this way is pretty heavy already, (Mr. *Dobbs* ſhews, *Eſſay Part* 1ſt. *p.* 81. that it coſts us 35000 l. yearly for Tar, Timber, and Deals imported from *Norway*, *&c.*) ſo it muſt yearly increaſe on us. And who can remedy this but Landlords, as well by encouraging Tennants to Plant, as to do it 'emſelves.——There's an Hardſhip alſo put on Tennants, which may be noticed, which is a great Diſcouragement to them; and does not contribute to the Benefit of the Landlord, farther than to add an *Item* to his Rent-roll. Suppoſe a Tennant be pretty much in his Landlords good Graces, and is ſometimes treated by him with Regard, and ſomething of Familiarity; yet if he ſhou'd happen to propoſe a Renewal, he ſhall be treated in a quite different Manner; this muſt be by Propoſals in Writing, (and perhaps ſealed too.) And if they are not to the Landlord's liking, then the Tennant is told of higher Propoſals by others. What can be more diſcouraging to an honeſt good Tennant,

than, either to be ſcrewed up by ſuch clandeſtine Propoſals, or that he muſt go off to *America*, or ſome where elſe; and that perhaps, after he has improven his Farm wel? Muſt it not be much better for Landlords, either, on renewing Leaſes unexpired, or ſetting Farms where there's no Leaſe, to deal candidly with Tennants, by treating with them in the firſt place; and when the Landlord comes to a point as to what he muſt have, (if the Tennant cannot give ſo much,) as he has the Opportunity, ſo he has Reaſon to entertain another bidder; and the Tennant hath not cauſe to complain? And to avoid this Evil, Landlords wou'd beware of liſtening to fawning Perſons about them, that are apt to entertain 'em with fine Stories, as to the Advancement of their Rents; ſuch being at the bottom, neither Friends to Landlord, or Tennant.——There are Diſcouragements alſo that Tennants meet with from ſeveral Agents, who take the aforeſaid Method in ſetting Farms; and, who oft times impoſe on thoſe who imploy 'em, by ſuch Rent-rolls as come greatly ſhort in the Payment. Some of 'em bear hard on Tennants in ſeveral things, and come to get the beſt Bargains into their own Hands, and thrive faſter than many of the Landlords. It wou'd be both the Credit, and Benefit of the greateſt Landlords, to take as near a View of their own Affairs as they can, and to know the State of the Country, and the Hardſhips that Multitudes labour under, and to ſee that their Tennants by whom they live, be not maletreated by thoſe they imploy, or by any others, and take care as far as poſſible, that Rents be laid on Farms proportioned to their real Value; which ſometimes may happen otherwiſe, either by Inadvertency or Deſign. In ſhort to act towards their Tennants, as the Patrons among the *Romans*, and to have their Tennants act towards them as Clients. It may be farther obſerv'd, that ſuch Landlords as have the Rectorial Tythes, might eaſe their Tennants conſiderably, if they wou'd add ſuch Tythes to their Rents; which might eaſily be done, by proportioning them on Farms according to their Value. As they know what they ſet them for to Tythe-farmers, ſo Tennants might eaſier pay, even the ſame Sum proportioned among them to the Landlord, than in the common way: for thus, the Tennant wou'd ſave what Profit the Tythe.

farmer

farmer muſt have, and the Landlord have as much as he now gets; beſides the eaſe it wou'd be to the Tennant, by not having different Perſons to deal with about his Tythe, when ſuch Rectorial Tythes are in one Tythe-farmer's hand, and the Vicarial in another's, as it now often happens, to the great trouble of poor Tennants.

As nothing is ſo much complain'd of as Tythes, ſo, doubtleſs it wou'd be a moſt charitable and chriſtian Act in the Clergy, of themſelves, to remove, or at leaſt leſſen the Grievances the Country labours under by them. This is in their power to do, by lowering their Demands, and thereby they wou'd remove a grand Reproach, (oftimes too juſt) which is laid to the charge of Church-men, namely Avarice! But as there's reaſon to fear they will be tardy this way; ſo 'tis to be wiſhed, that they in whoſe Power it is, wou'd take ſuch prudent Meaſures as wou'd make Tythes leſs burdenſome, both to Clergy and Laity. It hath been already obſerv'd, (and ſure no honeſt Chriſtian will deny it,) that ſuch as miniſter in ſacred Things, ſhou'd have a ſufficient Maintenance; and ſuch a Maintenance as will keep them from Poverty and Contempt, from worldly Diſtractions and Hurry, cannot but anſwer the End of their Office beſt as to them; and the more determinate it is, muſt anſwer beſt as to thoſe who pay it. Now as the preſent Unfixedneſs of the Tythes, as well as the Height they're rais'd to, is juſtly reckoned a Grievance; ſo, it appears, that the preſent Management of them does not remove all, or ſome one, or other of the aforeſaid Inconveniences, from the greater part of the Clergy: for, are not many of 'em as much embarqued in Hurry by worldly Affairs, (and ſo far taken off their proper Buſineſs,) and others of them as much ſtraiten'd in their Circumſtances as other Men? Now, wherein the Clergy cannot, or will not remedy theſe, or ſuch like Inconveniences; is it not (at leaſt in a good Meaſure,) in the power of the Legiſlature? And wou'd it not be worthy of them to determine and proportion Tythes better, for the ſake both of Clergy and Laity; that the one might be leſs encumbered, or diverted from their great Work; be more in the good Graces of thoſe they are to Inſtruct, and more able to do good to their Souls: and the other relieved of a conſiderable Diſcouragement and Grievance.

But

But ſuppoſing Tythes to be paid in the preſent Way, yet, ſtill the Clergy might do more themſelves to eaſe a poor Country. If they wou'd reſide on their Livings, and confine themſelves to one; (and as the Goſpel does not, ſo, none can oblige them to two or three:) it wou'd be of great Service. A Clergyman would then know the State of the Country better, and ſee how many miſerable Creatures have been ſqueezed to keep up his Grandeur in *Dublin*, or elſewhere, many Miles at a diſtance from his Charge: And if he have any Bowels of Compaſſion, might eaſe, if it were but ſuch neceſſitous Perſons, as the Law and the Tythe-farmer will oblige to pay. He might live more frugally, and avoid Temptations to worldly Divertiſements and Luxury, and have more Time for Reading, for Meditation and Prayer; as the Apoſtle enjoins him to do. With the Aſſiſtance of ſome of his Pariſhioners, he wou'd be in no Difficulty to manage his Tythes himſelf; or, by giving a reaſonable Bargain of them to his Pariſh, they might proportion them among 'emſelves; he wou'd ſave ſo much as he allows a Curate, and by letting his Tythe, even, the half of that Allowance cheaper to his Pariſh, it would be a Benefit to them; and the other half he could apply to neceſſary Uſes: And thus alſo the Tythe wou'd be leſſened all the Profit his Tythe-farmer makes, unleſs he would lay ſome Part of it on the People. But ſtill whatever he got, wou'd for the moſt Part be ſpent among them. By theſe Means, by Affability and Prudence, by Tenderneſs and Labouring among 'em for the good of their Souls, he wou'd gain their Affections, (which is pretty much wanting to moſt Clergymen at this Time;) even of thoſe that diſſent from him: And then Tythes would be paid more chearfully, than, when People rarely, and ſome of 'em never, ſee the Face of the Man they pay 'em to, nor have any Benefit by him. Long Experience ſhews, there's little Probability the Clergy will act thus of 'emſelves. But, as Pluralities and Non-Reſidence have been complained of, as a grand Abuſe, by ſome of the greateſt Men, both Clergy and Laity of the Eſtabliſhment: And however they may be connived at in Popiſh Countries, yet the Council of *Trent* itſelf, reckoned the Practice an Abuſe, and unjuſtifiable. And tho' 'tis become ſo Faſhionable in a Proteſtant

teſtant Clergy, yet, what Reaſon is there, why the Legiſlature may not interpoſe to ſtop it, (ſeeing Conſcience and Duty are not like to do it!) and confine each Clergyman to one Living, and Reſidence on it; (unleſs in neceſſary Caſes,) eſpecially, when it may in Part relieve a diſtreſſed Country.

Let us ſee what the worthy Gentleman already refered to, *viz.* Mr. *Dobbs*, ſays on the Head of Tythes, *Eſſay*, Part 2d. p. 92, &c. He takes Notice of the Complaints on the preſent Management of Tythes, and the occaſion it gives of Coldneſs between Clergy and Laity, which obſtructs the Clergy's Uſefulneſs, and is made an Handle to induce Thouſands of Proteſtant Diſſenters to go to *America*. That in the preſent way the Clergy will have the full Value from the Tythe-Farmers, and theſe again ſcrew up the Tythe, above the Value on the People. He therefore thinks it wou'd be for the Publick Good, that the Legiſlature would give a Power to the Clergy to ſet Leaſes of the Tythes, and to encourage them to ſet ſuch Leaſes, only to thoſe who hold the Land, or to the immediate Landlords of ſuch as hold it; and that a Power may be given to the Clergy to diſtrain the Tennant, as Lay-Landlords do. Such a Law he thinks wou'd be a Benefit to the Clergy, to the Laity, and to the Publick, and wou'd reſtore Harmony in many Places; the Clergy wou'd have a reaſonable Value for their Tythes made ſure, and the Occupiers of the Land be eaſed and encouraged. He thinks that if the Intention of the Law that gives the Tenth to the Clergy, to be paid in kind out of the Labour of the Laity, was ſolely to make them rich, and to raiſe their Families; much may be ſaid againſt the Method he propoſes: But, if the Tythes were given as a comfortable Subſiſtence for the Clergy's Families, and to take their Thoughts from worldy Affairs, that they might follow the Duties of their Function, and that they are to have a View to another World, for the chief reward of their Labour; then, that they ſhou'd not deſire the utmoſt of the Labour of the Laity due by Law, which gives People Impreſſions of their valuing the World too much, and thereby their Exhortations loſe weight, nor can they complain of Landlords for Racking and Squeezing their Tennants: In this Caſe, theſe and ſuch Things

make

make ſtrongly for the Method he propoſes. What this Gentleman ſays deſerves Attention, as having ſo much in it to the Purpoſe; and, which wou'd make Tythes more comfortable both for Clergy and Laity, than the Way they are now managed in: And unleſs the Legiſlature interpoſe, by this or ſome other proper Way, there's but ſlender hope of comfortable living in *Ireland*, from any Thing the Clergy 'emſelves ſeem inclin'd to do, by moderating or fixing the Tythes.

But leſt the Clergy ſhou'd think him Partial, or ill affected to their Order or Cauſe; I'll abridge ſome of his Obſervations, with reſpect to the Diſcouragement Tennants are under from other Hands; *Eſſay ibid*: p. 77. &c. He ſhews the want of a good Yeomanry in *Ireland*, is the Spring of many Evils. That ſhort Leaſes diſpirit Tennants, and diſcourage them from improving, eſpecially when they may expect to remove on the Expiration of their Leaſe, or give above the Value; that 'tis eaſy to find Landlords living above their Fortunes, on the Proſpect of retrieving their Affairs, by Fines on the Expiration of Leaſes, and that the higheſt Bidder will be prefer'd to an improving Tennant; who, if he can't advance to the Value of his Improvements, muſt ſhift for himſelf. He complains of the Method of ſetting Farms on Sealed Propoſals, as highly injurious to Tennants, and hurtful to Landlords themſelves: He adviſes Landlords to put themſelves in the place of Tennants, and ſee how they wou'd like the Treatment they give them: He enquires what it was that lately inclined ſo many to go to *America*, but high Rents, bad Seaſons, and want of good Tenures, this kept them Poor and Low, that they ſcarce cou'd get Neceſſaries to ſubſiſt on, or till their Ground, they never had any Thing in Store, and ſo were eaſily broke. He adds, that others found their Stock decaying, and ſo remov'd before all was gone, while they could pay their Paſſage, and had little more than wou'd carry 'em to the *American* Shore. And as for ſuch as had Leaſes, and ſold them, and remov'd with their Effects; he obſerves, the Examples they ſaw of others diſpoſſeſſed of their Lands on the Expiration of their Leaſes, and no Preference given to them, made them expect the ſame Treatment when their Leaſes expired, and therefore they wou'd go in Time where they cou'd

cou'd ſettle on a permanent Property. In ſhort he ſays, the preſent ſhort Tenures ſerve only as a Snare to induce our Nobility and Gentry to be Extravagant, Arbitrary, and ſometimes Tyranical; and the Commonality to be dejected, diſprited, and in ſome Places in a manner Slaves. And then he ſhews largely, if Tennants were ſettled on a better, and ſurer Footing, what an happy Alteration it wou'd make in our Affairs for the better.——As this was wrote nine Years ago, what may be ſaid now? How much worſe have the Circumſtances of Tennants been in many Reſpects ſince that Time? How much is their Condition now worſe, eſpecially when ſo many have had a great Part of their Subſiſtence to buy at an extravagant Price? However the Clergy have got their Tythes in, (which generally ſpeaking are before Hand with the Rents, yet) Gentlemen ſhou'd conſider how they expect to get the vaſt Arrears in many Places owing, paid them by a great Number of Tennants, either altogether in, or near to a broken Condition. And as there has been a greater run of People to *America*, ſince Mr. *Dobbs* wrote, than before that Time; ſo, both Landlords and Clergy wou'd do well to conſider, that there may be Danger (eſpecially if the preſent War was over) that the like Courſe may again prevail; and therefore timeouſly take ſuch gentle and proper Meaſures as may prevent it, and not by uſing ſuch Severe Methods, as were lately like to be practiſed for that End.

Mr. *Dobbs* alſo ſhows plainly in ſeveral other Caſes, where the Nation ſuffers greatly, and is in a languiſhing Condition: He inſiſts particularly how uſeful Granaries wou'd be to preſerve Grain, when we have plentiful Crops, that Markets might be kept reaſonable when we have bad ones. He makes it evident, that there's a great want of Induſtry and Encouragement for it, whereby we might be ſupplied in many Things at home, that are a great Expence by their Importation. (The Gentlemen of the *Dublin* Society alſo take notice, what loſers we are in this reſpect.) He alſo treats largely of the State of the Poor, and particularly as to idle and ſturdy Vagrants, that go about begging: which is a Grievance that every one is complaining of. He ſhews that by erecting Work-houſes, with proper means for ſupporting 'em, a great Benefit might accrue to the Publick, by obliging the able

(which

(which are the greater part of Beggars,) to work; and where real Objects might be comfortably Subſiſted. In theſe, and other things, I apprehend this Gentleman lays a Foundation, that a uſeful Superſtructure might be built upon for the Publick Good. But what ſignifies this or the other Perſon propoſing well, and ſhewing a regard for their Country, if nothing be effected? And it is obvious how little is done by the bulk of Gentlemen this way, tho' in the main it wou'd be their own Intereſt.——

Several Perſons of Abilities have contributed towards a very good Work, the erecting, and endowing of Schools for breeding Popiſh Children in the Principles of the Proſtant Religion, and rendring them (when grown up) more uſeful for the Publick. And certainly the Caſe of the Poor (many of whom are Ignorant, as to any thing of Religion:) requires the compaſſionate Conſideration of Gentlemen and Clergy. If they wou'd apply for two or three Years, a ſmall part (ſuppoſe a 60th.) of their Fortunes and Livings, towards the erecting Work-houſes, others of Ability and a charitable Spirit wou'd be encouraged to join in ſo good a Work. As this wou'd be the beſt kind of Charity, ſo it wou'd be a publick Good; and beſides, it wou'd be every ones Intereſt who gives to the Poor, to contribute to it: for in the iſſue they would probably be eaſier that way, than in the preſent manner of ſupplying the Poor. Perhaps there's no Nation in a worſe State as to the poor, and idle Perſons than we are; and tho' the honeſt and induſtrious loſe conſiderably by maintaining the latter ſort, or by their ſtealing from 'em, yet when do we ſee one ſuch, taken notice of by ſuch who have Power to do it? and even ſuch as are under ſome kind of Diſtempers, or Lame, there are few of 'em, but might earn a Livelyhood, at leaſt do ſomething for 'emſelves and the Publick, if due care was taken to put, and keep them at work. But unleſs men of Abilities lead the Way, and do ſomething freely, to promote ſuch a Deſign, 'tis queſtionable if a legal Method alone, would anſwer; at leaſt it wou'd require conſiderable time. And the Malady is ſo great and univerſal, (eſpecially by our hard Times and the low State many are in;) ſo much complained of, and ſo burdenſome; that the more ſpeedily a Remedy cou'd be found, it wou'd be ſo much the better.

better. Tho' the Law in *England* hath taken great care of the Poor, (and might according to Mr. *Dobbs*'s Scheme, or ſomething to that purpoſe, be of great uſe to us:) yet, 'tis the voluntary Contributions and Charities of Men of Ability, that hath very much put that Matter on the preſent good Footing there.

It has been obſerv'd that our Numbers are conſiderably increaſed in *Ireland*, and many among us I apprehend, are too much lifted up on that Head; becauſe 'tis obſerved, that nothing contributes ſo much to the Wealth of a Nation as People. But it may be queſtion'd how far this will hold with us, where there ſeem to be Failures of due Meaſures to promote and encourage Induſtry; and when ſo many of our People are diſpirited or idle, in a broken Condition or Beggars. And yet after all it muſt be owned, that many of our meaner ſort of People, Tradeſmen and others, ſeem very inſenſible of what Hardſhips they meet with to get Bread: and imitating, and attending on the Diverſions of the Great, copying after their Luxury and Extravagance, (as far as in their power,) is what too many ſuch, fondly run into! It were well that thoſe in ſuperior Stations, both Gentlemen and Clergy wou'd diſcourage and ſuppreſs, as far as in their Power, both by Authority and Example, every thing that tends to debauch the meaner ſort, and make them leſs uſeful to the Publick, to themſelves and Families: It's plain alſo that too many of our dealing People have got an extravagant Taſte, and by their way of Living or ſome faulty Conduct, (for when Loſſes and Accidents cauſe a Man to break, he is not culpable) being unable to keep their Credit; do greatly Hurt or even Ruin ſome of thoſe they deal with and their Families! Luxury and Extravagance in ſome, or Indolence and want of due Regard to the Publick; Idleneſs and Careleſſneſs in many; Hardſhips and Diſcouragements on the Induſtrious, or ſuch as wou'd be ſo; a Series of bad Seaſons, and Scarcity of Proviſions, will ſink a Nation of much greater Wealth and better Trade than *Ireland* can claim to.

All that has been ſaid, is chiefly in Favour of thoſe who are the greateſt Sufferers in our low Condition, namely Farmers; and thence to ſhow that fixing Rents ſo as Tennants can live and pay them, and giving them

ſure Tenures; and likewiſe bringing Tythes to ſome Moderation and Certainty; ſeem to be the Principal and ſure Means to put this poor Kingdom in a good Condition. Whatever Schemes may be gone into by the Legiſlature for our Improvement; or whatever Encouragement they may give for promoting the Linnen Buſineſs, or any other; or whatever Rules and Methods, particular Gentlemen, or as united in Societies, may lay down for managing Land and Flax, don't appear fully to anſwer the End, unleſs ſomething of this Nature be done. Whatever means may be propoſed to Tennants to better their Condition, they are neither in Heart, nor of Ability to proſecute them under diſtreſſing Poverty, and oftimes pinching Scarcity; nor will they be willing to eſſay them (where able) under diſcouraging Uncertainty.——As this reaſonable courſe wou'd be evidently for the Intereſt of Landlords and Clergy, by making 'em much ſurer of what they are entitled to, (as well as ſtrengthen and promote the Publick Good,) ſo, it wou'd have a great deal of Equity in it. Demands on poor People higher than what they can bear, or fixing Rents or Tythes above what the Value, or Produce of the Ground can anſwer, is no doubt criminal. And there are Inſtances enow of thoſe who take Land, that have no Proſpect (nor perhaps Intention) of paying what they promiſe, but they get a Subſiſtence for two or three Years, and it may be pay ſome Part, and ſo break or run off; and thus Landlords are but impos'd on? Let Landlords and Clergy conſider, if they had been in the Caſe of many Thouſands in *Ireland* theſe paſt Years, (and Providence might have ſo diſpoſed of 'em) what wou'd they think? Nature and Humanity enforce that noble Rule of *doing to others as we wou'd be done to by them*, as well as Religion; and ſure this is a Time that calls loudly for practiſing it.——This wou'd farther remove or prevent a great deal of Evil. What hath even a tendency to Oppreſs, or ſcrew Farmers above what they can pay, or what the times will allow, is to be avoided; ſeeing the Principles, of both Nature and Religion declaim ſtrongly againſt it! And ſuch as have Demands of Rent and Tythe on Farmers, ſhou'd remove all juſt Cauſe of their murmuring and complaining, or thinking harſhly of 'em; and fix them in ſuch a Situation, that they

they may be able to fulfil their Covenants, to ſupport themſelves, and pay cheerfully and punctually. And even tho' this were leſs, yet prompt Payment of it, will be more uſeful, than a greater Sum lying over for ſome time, tho' it ſhou'd be paid at laſt.——This courſe wou'd alſo have a great deal Good and Praiſe-worthy in it. Gentlemen and Clergy wou'd thus exert the Virtues of Compaſſion and Kindneſs, Love and Humanity; yea, it wou'd be a kind of Charity, which is the Sum of all Virtues; ſeeing it may be reckoned a greater Act of Charity which hath laſting Effects, by putting a Perſon in a Way of living and ſupporting his Family, and thereby being uſeful to others, than a tranſient Act, which affords him only preſent Support. It wou'd ſhew a juſt Senſe of the increaſing Hardſhips that Numbers have ſufferd theſe paſt Years, and that, even as Rents and Tythes were advancing, (which might rather have checked their Advancement,) and ſhew all concerned that 'tis now full time to ſtop. When one reflects on the charitable and compaſſionate Spirit in many Perſons of Ability, (and which even appear'd in thoſe of meaner Circumſtances,) both Laity and Clergy, when Numbers were pinched by the late ſevere Froſt: It gives ſome Hopes, that ſuch in whoſe Power it is, on conſidering Affairs with due Attention, may yet make their Pity and Compaſſion more extenſively uſeful, and do ſomething for the Eaſe of ſuch whoſe Hardſhips have been much more laſting, and I doubt not oftimes fully as pinching, as thoſe who were relieved at that Time. Markets were low then, in compariſon of what they have been ſince, as not only the Poor, and Tradeſmen, and Labourers have felt; but which many Farmers have ſenſibly felt above others. Tho' ſome (as has been obſerved) did a good deal for the Relief of the Poor and their Tennants this hard Summer, yet too many of opulent Fortunes have been too narrow-hearted. How pleaſing muſt the Account be we lately had in the public News of Mr. *Damer*, who at the Time of, and ſince the late Froſt, hath laid out above Fifteen Hundred Pounds for the Relief of diſtreſſed Creatures, and for keeping down the Markets? What a noble Inſtance, and Example of a humane and Chriſtian Spirit? How much better was this expended, than in that extravagant Way wherein too many great

great Men ſpend their Fortunes, ruin their Families, prejudice their Health, ſet a bad Example, and debaſe their Characters! All which render them very much unſerviceable for the Publick Good.

UPON the Whole, (that I may conclude this Letter, that's run out longer than deſign'd;) I cannot be perſwaded, but on a due Enquiry, it will appear to an unprejudiced Conſiderer, there are ſeveral Grievances that People labour under in *Ireland*, (eſpecially Farmers) that need to be redreſſed, in order to our being in a truly Comfortable, and Flouriſhing Way; that our People may have due Means of Living, and Subſiſtence for 'emſelves and their Families, and not be under the Temptation, or Neceſſity of ſeeking it elſewhere: And that thoſe in whoſe Power it is to do this, eſpecially to put Farmers in a better Situation; will conſult their own Intereſt, and that of the Publick by taking ſuch a Courſe, as may effectually put us on a better Footing. If the Obſervations I have made (which I take in the Main to be Juſt,) contribute to give you ſuch a Senſe of our Circumſtances, or thoſe to whom you may communicate them; it is the great End propoſed by

Sir,

Yours, &c.

ERRATA.

PAge 6. *line* 24. *for* left, *read* felt. *And, p.* 8. 4*th l. from the Bottom, for* light *read* heavy.

Anon. Kress 4495.